VOLUME 3, NUMBER 5
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# TAKE ONE

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John Crittenden, *The Record*

NCC

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# TAKE ONE

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**TAKE ONE** is published bi-monthly by Unicorn Publishing Corp., Post Office Box 1778, Station B, Montreal 110, Canada. **Subscription rates:** North America, 12 issues for $4.50; Overseas, 12 issues for $6.50. Airmail: Add 30 cents per issue (North America) and 50 cents per issue (Overseas). Subscriptions sent free to individuals at prison addresses. **Notice of change of address** should include your old address on the mailing label of a recent issue; allow four weeks for processing. **Editorial information:** All manuscripts, drawings and photographs submitted must be accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. While the editors will take all reasonable care, they will not be held responsible for the loss of any such submissions. **Index:** This Publication is indexed in the *Canadian Periodical Index*, in the *International Index to Film Periodicals*, and in the *Multi-Media Reviews Index*. **Microfilm** editions of this magazine are available from: University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106. Second class mail registration number 1899. Printed at Montreal, Canada.

Printed in Canada.
Issue of May-June 1971;
Published July 24, 1972.

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# FEEDBACK

*TAKE ONE welcomes communications from its readers, but can rarely accommodate letters over 500 words in length. The editors assume that any letter received (unless otherwise stated) is free for publication.*

Your comments on **The French Connection** (Vol. 3 No. 3) echo the other critics, hung up on the car chase which, in your words, "cuts **Bullitt**". Surely this sequence in **The French Connection** was one of its more absurd elements — one of several (another was the shoot-out at the end when Popeye shoots his superior officer) which made the film seem far phonier, although it was based on true material, than the complete fiction of **Bullitt**. The chase in **Bullitt** was credible as well as exciting. **The French Connection** was mere cinematic extravagance which became ludicrous.

What was far more tense and gripping to this viewer was the foot-chase through the crowded street and subway, when Popeye and his aide tailed the chief villain. This was non-violent and yet more suspenseful than the smash and clash of fenders and gears. It was cops-and-robbers stuff par excellence, without the brutality which has pre-empted the current police melodrama.

You also echo the "fascist" accusations re **Dirty Harry**. How is this film an attack on liberal law enforcement? It presented an individual case, about a rare (?) type of psychopathic killer, illustrating that in some instances the enlightened approach to police work is a farce. This is true of *any* progressive legislation: that it will be used by the unscrupulous and devious for their own ends. But this does not negate its overall value to society. The advantages given to the professional criminal by liberalized police laws in the U.S. are a "natural" as a basis for this kind of plot (a film, we might add, considerably superior to **The French Connection**). But only a fanatical and super-sensitive liberal could take it seriously as a blanket attack on liberalized criminal law.

H. Francis
London, Ont.

*Fascism in **Dirty Harry**: We are always invited, in dealing with works of art, to generalize from "individual cases." The attack on liberalized criminal law in **Dirty Harry** doesn't bother us nearly as much as the sequence where Scorpio pays someone to beat him up so he can then accuse the cops of police brutality. The implication of this absurd sequence is obvious: police brutality does not exist, except in the imaginations of criminals, political prisoners and peace freaks. We know a few victims of police brutality ourselves, and they paid for their lumps on a 1040 income tax form. — MG*

You should have called your **Clockwork** symposium "Love for Three Oranges". But, I was surprised to see TAKE ONE magazine committing acts of ultra-violence on **A Clockwork Orange**.

In Kubrick's 'clockwork cadences' (Wyndham Lewis), we can see ourselves as the victims of a society in which individuals are judged by their acts, not by their reasons. I had thought Krassner would have appreciated the bizarre slang, since he himself is the originator of such expressions as 'soft-on'. As for the complaint that Alex' enthusiasm for Beethoven was over-played, even Ludwig Van has got like weepy millions of fervent admirers.

I can viddy, oh my brothers, that TAKE ONE is one magazine Alex wouldn't subscribe to at his prison address. Like it or do the other thing, I say yarbles to those who viddy not the 'Visions Fugitives' of Kubrick. Krassner and droogs can smeck like bezoomny, but **A Clockwork Orange** brought the old tears to my glazzies. Yours sincerely, and all that cal,

Malcolm Junor
Saskatoon, Sask.

Your article on women as film directors was timely and full of interest.

However, I was amazed that you should have overlooked Gudrun Bjerring Parker, one of the first women directors with the National Film Board. **A City Sings** and **The Stratford Story** are among her well-known early works.

She and her husband, Morten Parker, have won several awards. I am sorry I cannot be more specific, but it seemed more important to call attention to the omission than to document my protest.

Elizabeth Trott
Willowdale, Ontario

***The Stratford Adventure**, as it is more properly called, made at the Film Board in 1954, is credited to Morten Parker as director; Gudrun Parker is credited with the scenario (the film has won eight awards, including an Oscar nomination). Ms. Parker has over sixteen films to her own credit (as director and/or producer) at the Board. — Ed.*

# CLASSIFIEDS

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# FESTIVALS AND COMPETITIONS

The 1972 **International Film & TV Festival of New York**, celebrating its 15th anniversary this year, is to be held at the Americana Hotel October 24 through 27. All sorts of films and filmstrips may be entered in competition (industrial, educational, television, promotional, etc.). Full details and application blanks from the Film Festival office at: 251 West 57th Street, New York 10019 (212-246-5133).

Films in 16mm, 8mm and super-8 by talented newcomers are being sought by the Fifth Annual **BACA (Brooklyn Arts and Culture Ass'n.) Film Festival**. Deadline for entries is August 25 and more details are available from: Chuck Reichenthal, BACA, 200 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11238 (212-783-4469).

November 24 through 26, the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles is the site of the first annual **Science Fiction and Fantasy Film Convention**. Lots of films will be shown; stars, directors and writers will be there in profusion; there will be exhibits and panel discussions. And there will also be an amateur film contest for student filmmakers (full details on this latter item from: D. Carol Roberts, Student Film Committee, P.O. Box 9097, Phoenix, Arizona). For information on the convention itself contact: Fantasy Film Fans International, P.O. Box 74866, Los Angeles, Calif. 90004.

The First **Market Place for Animation** takes place at Miami Beach's Fontainbleau Hotel November 18 through 25 and includes symposia, demonstrations and a competition (under the aegis of an international jury that includes Zelimir Matko, Director of Zagreb Films) with six awards. Write: Fred Mintz, USA-laff, Suite 901, 850 Seventh Avenue, New York 10019.

Further information on the **Cine Golden Eagle Awards** (November 9 through 12) may be had by writing Anita S. Price, Cine, 1201 16th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

September 15 is the deadline for entries to the 8th annual **Chicago International Film Festival** (held November 3 through 23 this year). Entry forms from: Michael J. Kutza, Jr., Room 301, 12 East Grand Avenue, Chicago, Ill. 60611.

The Fourth **Guadalajara International Short Film Festival** is to be held November 18 through 25 of this year. Films have to be less than 30 minutes long, more recent than 1970, in 16mm or 35mm, with optical sound. An international jury will award three prizes. No registration fee. Deadline: October 1. Write: Mr. Carlos Pizano y Saucedo, City Hall, Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico.

The annual **Columbus Film Festival** is to be held October 26 (deadline: August 1). Any kind of film, of any length, produced 1970 to date, may be entered. Write: Miss Mary Rupe, Secretary, Film Council of Greater Columbus, 83 South High Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215.

An **8mm International Film Festival** will be held in Halifax, Nova Scotia the last week of August. This is not a competition, but a selected number of films will be widely distributed (there is no entry fee). Deadline for submissions is August 15. Film Festival, Box P, 6152 Coburg Road, Halifax, N.S., Canada.

The Fifth Annual **Monterey Independent Film-Makers Festival** is going to take place August 23-27 this year. Entries (which must reach the organizers no later than August 1) are open to 16mm films (optical soundtrack or silent only) of not more than 45 minutes' running time, that have been completed after April 1, 1971. There is a $7.50 entry fee for all but overseas filmmakers. Up to $2000 in prizes will be awarded. Further information can be had from: Monterey Independent Film Makers Festival, Monterey Peninsula College, Creative Arts Division, 980 Fremont, Monterey, Ca. 93940. (408-375-9821).

# The Elusiveness of

PHOTO CANADIAN FILM ARCHIVES

# Conrad Rooks

## by Robert McDonald

The first impression Conrad Rooks creates is one of forthrightness. But I've had three interviews during the past four years, and read thousands of words of press cuttings and, instead of corroborating one another, they've turned up numerous discrepancies — all minor but nonetheless annoying. Perhaps my questions have been sloppy. Perhaps the press reports have been carelessly written. But I think not.

I think the elusiveness lies in Rooks. He is a reformed heroin addict, and convinced that having beaten his habit he can accomplish anything. The result is overoptimism which leads him, when discussing his work, to exaggerate. For example, in September, 1967, he said he would begin shooting **Siddhartha**, his second film, in November. He did not wrap up the deal until two years later, and shooting began in late 1971.

When talking about himself, Rooks is reticent to discuss his past. It's a business liability, and he'd rather concentrate on who he is and what he's capable of today. As a result, the details of his past are hazy. Finally, Rooks has a tendency to put-on persons he finds dull. I've seen him tell Athenian journalists that he plans to shoot westerns in the Greek mountains, and read gossip columns citing him as saying that he's planning to star Rex Harrison and Glenda Jackson as Siddhartha and Kamala. Thus a disclaimer: it is impossible to be one hundred percent certain about anything concerning Conrad Rooks.

Rooks' family background is a stereotype of the American dream gone sour. His father was a travelling salesman who worked his way up to President of the Avon cosmetics company. The family was well off materially, but emotionally impoverished. Conrad was born on December 15, 1934 in Kansas City, Mo. As a child he underwent a series of painful leg operations for which he was heavily doped with morphine. As a consequence, he developed a high drug tolerance. In his early teens, when the family moved into the executive-mansions town of Chappaqua, N.Y., Rooks fell in with a "fast" set and took up drinking. "I had a screwed up metabolism. I couldn't take one drink without drinking myself onto the floor. Then I was happy." At 15, Rooks was a chronic alcoholic. He suffered horribly from delirium tremens. "I found pot would chase the snakes away. Alcohol was the root of the trouble and the drugs a means of escape." From marijuana, Rooks graduated to cocaine, opium, and finally to an addiction to heroin.

After a rough ride through several prep schools, and a stint in the Marines, Rooks moved to New York City to make his way in the artistic community. It was the beginning of the beat era, and he became friends with poets Gregory Corso and Allen Ginsberg. Family friends got him a job acting in live network television dramas, but he was blacklisted after disappearing on a six-week bender to the Bahamas.

Rooks drifted through a course at Actor's Studio, and a television production program. He graduated to making sexploitation movies budgeted under $30,000. Rooks' habit meanwhile had gained "a thousand dollar a week grip." He borrowed a lot and stole some. Then, in 1956, he was arrested for possession of marijuana. Because of the public's lack of familiarity with drugs, and his father's position in the business community, the incident blew into a front-page scandal in New York. Rooks received a suspended sentence, but he was effectively ostracized in New York.

His next six years were spent on the beat trail East: London, Paris, Nice, North Africe, Greece, India, Cambodia, Japan. Rooks sometimes followed, sometimes was in the vanguard. In France, he became friends with William Burroughs. He claims he recommended India to Ginsberg and Peter Orlovsky. Rooks married a half Russian woman and they had a son to whom he became exceedingly attached. But his condition detoriated, and by the time he reached Athens he was fixing into his tongue to improve the high.

The turnaround came in 1962 when Rooks' father died. The two had never got along. "My father had scarcely even seen me sober when he died." But the elder Rooks' last gesture was to leave his son a legacy of half a million dollars. The situation reeked of melodrama. Shortly before he died, the father called his profligate son to his bedside. "My lawyers advise against my leaving you anything," he said. "But you've always talked about making a film. I've got faith in you." Rooks says his father's death came as "an enormous shock." He says he realized that he had been "a remittance man" for years. "I never realized what a buffer my father had been. The inheritance was a double-edged sword. I could use it for one grand blow out, or I could put in on the line and struggle like everyone else."

Rooks invested $800 in a sleep cure at a specialized clinic in Zurich, then spent a year rebuilding his system while living at Glyfada, a Greek beach resort. "I did nothing but swim, run, eat and sleep." He also began to rough out ideas for **Chappaqua**. It was a three and a half year project costing three quarters of a million dollars. Rooks shot for two years, on 40 location sites on three continents, and then spent 18 months editing the accumulated material. His unorthodox production methods caused a good deal of scepticism in the filmmaking community, but the finished product won him the Silver Lion at the 1966 Venice Film Festival.

The superficial narrative was about the cure of a junkie seen through the eyes of the addict, "a documentary of somebody's

therapeutic process," or in the most literal sense living cinema — Rooks remaking himself through making his film. The symbolic substructure concerned the addict's quest for his lost innocence. "It's the lost innocence he had as a child. Chappaqua is Indian — Iroquois or Algonquin — for the source, sacred place of running waters. It's the myth of the eternal return. The water runs into the sea, is taken up, rain falls on the land .... The addict is an archetype searching for symbols of transformation."

Rook's personal philosophy is a complex amalgam incorporating elements of drug culture, western Indian religious ritual, oriental philosophy, Christian theology and liberal social conscience. Basically it boils down to this: the individual in contemporary society is corrupted by bureaucracy, mechanization and "cybernation." His life is filled with artificial relationships, synthetic goods and vicarious experience. But the individual is basically innocent. "A man is an animal, albeit a blessed animal because he has a soul." A doctor in **Chappaqua** speaks with the addict and says "Descartes was my grandfather." It is the technician's voice of reason. Rooks believes that the pendulum in western society is swinging beyond rationality towards a greater awareness of a more "natural and spiritual" state. The contemporary generation has sought escape through the use of alcohol and drugs, and has attempted to create a new social order of bucolic simplicity such as that found in rural communes. Interest in North American Indian society has revived because it combined the simple life with drug culture. The Indian understood that he was "no more divorced from the grand plan than leaves, soil ... everything else. He used drugs in worship to help him establish and maintain this organic relationship."

Rooks himself has turned to Buddhism, and has substituted yoga for drugs as the physical concommitant to his metaphysical instruction. He doesn't totally condemn drugs, and suggests that informed use might be valuable. But he feels strongly about the use preached by men such as Ginsberg and Tim Leary, whom he says have "not really thought through their positions" and are dabblers both in exotic religions and the use of drugs.

"Tim and Allen have taken bits and pieces of this and applied it to whatever bag they're in. But they're on drug induced states. Ghandi and Christ achieved enlightenment of terrific power. When everything necessary inside can be brought out, it's a lot greater than turn on, tune in and drop out. It's kind of like straighten out, fly right and join in."

Rooks initially contracted with a Universal subsidiary, Regional Films, to handle **Chappaqua**. He claims that they promised to spend $300,000 promoting the picture, but that they pulled it out of New York after nine weeks and put it on general release for two weeks, then abandoned it. Rooks subcontracted distribution in five European countries, but his returns were practically nil.

Most of the money to make **Chappaqua** had been borrowed against stock which formed part of his inheritance. After the fiasco with Regional, Rooks risked being wiped out unless he quickly recouped his position. In 1968 he moved to New York and began to devote virtually all his time to playing the stock market. He claims to have made $4 million. At the same time, he has spent time learning the mechanics of distribution and getting the package together for his second film **Siddhartha**, based on the Herman Hesse novel. It is being shot in India, and could open in New York in late 1972. Rooks plans to open **Siddhartha** himself. If it takes off he'll be a very rich man — because the film's $1 million budget is all his own money.

This is not of his own choosing. Rooks offered every major studio a chance to participate. But he says the studios all turned him down because they were leery of his past. So he's formed a holding company which owns his production company and his distribution company. He's paid out $500,000 to buy back the distribution rights to **Chappaqua** and plans to re-release it after **Siddhartha**. It's a gamble of vast proportions which could make or break Rooks. He's approaching the project with the determination of a man out to demonstrate to the studios that they've made a mistake.

Rooks has been working from a London base, commuting to Bombay for the past six months. The following interview was conducted at the Ritz Hotel on a morning when Rooks had created great consternation by jogging through the lobby in running togs for a morning constitutional.

*Conrad Rooks, you are an ex-beatnik and a Buddhist. How do you marry your private interests with the hard-nosed business of making films?*

ROOKS: Well, I don't know whether I have married it, but ... I have decided that it's perfectly all right to engage in business as long as you engage in it with no particular interest in the result. In my case I had the possibility of getting some money to invest in the stock market, and I took that and kept doubling up on it to the point where I earned about $4 million. At the same time, in the movie business (because of problems with distributors and big corporations which are now in a decline) I lost some money. So what I found out is that cinema basically is a gambling game ....

I'm concerned with the politics of liberation. Don't tell me about how happy I'm going to be. Tell me how I can achieve happiness. One way of achieving happiness is to act, to work, to do your thing with no particular interest in how your thing turns out. Simply doing something for the love of doing it. Doing a film because you love film and because you like to do it well. Making a manipulation on the stock market because you know how to get it together and what bank to go to and how to make a loan and how to get the bank to do what you want. Winning a game, simply for the sake and perfection of executing the moves. I think the biggest mistake is getting mesmerized by the results. The results are not important. Everything that you've got can be taken away from you tomorrow.

*How does this sort of attitude mix with the very hard-nosed qualities of Wall Street and the money that is needed for making commercial films?*

ROOKS: The only thing that is needed there is homework — knowing where they get their money from, how the money operates and knowing their language. Every kind of work has its own language. Like if you talk with cinema people, they talk about a three-picture deal with a negative pick-up, and this, that and that. If you don't understand the language that they're speaking, then it's like Greek. The same is true of Wall Street. They want to know what your pay-out schedule is and how much interest is going to be applied against this and how do you offset that against that and so forth .... If you speak their language, and you present the deal thought out, then the possibilities of getting them to react are excellent. But if, on the other hand, you go to them and say "Look, think this out for me, I don't understand this," your chances that they'll listen to you are going to be a great deal less.

*You made a successful film, **Chappaqua**. It won the Silver Lion at Venice. One gets the impression you then threw it away, in a commercial sense, while you tried to market it and learn marketing techniques in the process. Was it worth it?*

ROOKS: Absolutely. I always wanted to be able to make a film which had a potential of earning a great deal of money, and the only way you can put that money in your own pocket ultimately is knowing all the phases and all the pitfalls that a film can go through. So knowing what I know now, through more or less sacrificing this one film, I may take a much bigger step some way down the line in which I will make up for all the losses in the first film, and furthermore hold on to all that I make.

The major companies have so many different ways of cutting your throat — from their accounting methods to their studio overheads to the fact that most of them have been invaded by conglomerates and they're no longer movie people, they're mainly technocrats who operate with computers. Movies, apropos of the Hollywood syndrome and the method of making them, are finished. That is not the future.

The method of distributing these films will change radically also. I see the last vestiges of Hollywood basically as a kind of mail order clearing house where a lot of the packaging, a lot of the transferring of old films to video tape, storage of images and so forth will go on. But as far as being a force in the creative making of films, that's past.

*When you made **Chappaqua** you were a legitimate spokesman for people like Allen Ginsberg and William Burroughs and people who were very much on the fringe of society. Now that you have this business experience can you still be a legitimate spokesman for that group of people, or have you removed yourself from them?*

ROOKS: I don't think I've ever removed myself from them insofar as my basic admiration and respect for what their movement really meant. Even this reference to tape that I made, Burroughs taught me the use of tape. Burroughs was writing his novels with the use of a tape recorder. When I first watched him do this I said,"My God, Bill, isn't this kind of sterile? What do you, a poet, have to do with all this tape, taping, retaping, cutting and editing?" And he said, "Well, look, the instrument exists. How foolish not to use it to expand your possibilities ...." It's probably, for an artist, one of the big important moments in his life when he realizes that the collective work of mankind is his, and that it is how skillfully he uses, edits and relates these things to his own experience that makes for his breakthrough.

*Yes, but this is getting away from the point I was trying to make. Advertising has also taken many of the techniques of contemporary writers and contemporary artists and incorporated them. You, I believe, are trying to make something creative and financially viable at the same time. Has this been possible?*

ROOKS: Of course it's possible, by a blending of the two techniques.

The underground, the poets Corso, Ginsberg and Burroughs, were simply saying that poetry was going to go out of the realm of the so-called aristocratic educated class and was soon coming into the street. They heralded the Beatles and Bob Dylan. They were the first prophets to sing that this was coming. When *Bomb* was written, it told about this cultural explosion that was going to come, this music that was going to come from Liverpool, these lyrics, and this guy named Bob Zimmerman that was going to electrify a generation. But there's an awful lot of Corso and Ginsberg in Bob Dylan. There's also a lot of Burroughs in the Beatles. All of these things mean simply that you can apply the techniques of liberation only if you can muster enough financial power to push it through to the mass.

*Do you still have the intimate contact with these people, such as Burroughs and Ginsberg, which you once had?*

ROOKS: Well, I don't know if they any longer have the intimate contact with themselves that they once had. Success, time, passage of vision, all these things affect poets. It isn't necessary for us to call each other on the phone every day. I'm 37 now. Burroughs is 57, Allen is 47, Gregory is 46. They're already getting to be old men. I'm on my way. I think that all of us have had to kind of live in a split schizophrenic state. We've had to maintain contact with youth, retard a certain form of maturation in order to have that flow and understanding of young people and to be sympathetic to their cause. But also all of us are inexorably caught up in time, caught up in old age, and eventually we'll be caught up in death. So we can't maintain the same electrifying contact of youth. We can only maintain respect for the general purpose.

*Can you have any influence then if you no longer have the contact?*

ROOKS: It's not just having influence. The great secret is how do you keep energizing your own psyche? Maybe perhaps what Picasso has done is the solution, you know, 19 children, six, seven wives, go on painting, fill a palace full of paintings, keep on painting, painting, working, having children, forget about it. They want money for alimony. Give it to them. He has a personal corporation of kids, wives, families and things which is larger than General Motors. There's something to be learned from that. Don't be afraid. What can they possibly do to you? Just go on. Do your own thing.

*But Picasso hasn't spent four years making his money in Avon products so that he can go back to the market of youth. And you have. Have you not removed yourself somewhat from it in the process?*

ROOKS: I haven't thought of going back to the youth market. I simply have thought of this, and even Picasso had to think of this. There must have been a period during the time that he was with Gertrude Stein, his so-called blue period, in Paris, where he had to cultivate dealers, where he had to find out where the outlets for his paintings could be so that he could buy material, so that he could continue to work and so that he could go forward. I had to spend four years to find out where are the markets for films, where's the money for the films, who sells them, how are they sold and how can I turn them out. This is what I've been tooling up. It's never been with "I'm going into the youth market." It's "I'm going into the making of films for the sheer love and execution of film."

*When you originally conceived* ***Siddhartha*** *several years ago, you were talking about starring Peter Fonda who happened to be something of a cult figure then. Now when you're getting back to the film again, four years later, you're talking about starring James Taylor, another figure who happens to be riding high in public interest. Isn't there an element of commercialization, exploitation, involved in this?*

ROOKS: It's not so much the commercial thing, it's the realizing that the hero is a symbol to the mass, the archetype of the hero. This archetype changes from one year to the next. Next year it'll be a different type of hero. And cinema is really the science of capturing *what is going down now*. What *will* be going down. It is an art form which is not static at all, and you must constantly be projecting into the future in order to come out even with the now. I mean, I don't think in terms so much of whether James Taylor is commercial, I just think that James Taylor looks to me the way I would like Siddhartha to look.

*Doesn't this imply that this new sub-culture is simply a reflection, perhaps even a pale reflection, of the culture which existed before with its own set of stars?*

ROOKS: Yes, I don't think there's any difference. I think that this is the nature of man. I mean the Greeks were doing this. They had their stars, Apollo, they had their gods. The cinema *per se* produces the gods of the masses, and the men and women who are involved in making films are the magicians.

END

*Robert McDonald is originally from Vancouver, and worked for various Canadian newspapers before moving to Athens — where he was a free-lance writer and broadcaster. Presently operating out of London, he is working on a book about contemporary Greece.*


# RESULTS OF IMPORTANT SURVEY JUST IN!

An exhausted survey among the owner and president of Quinn Laboratories, Mr. Findlay J. Quinn respectively, has just been digested by the computers, wheezing, hissing and zapockating.

The key question in sub-section 18C, namely #319 a, b, c, & d, ran as follows:

> *"What, in your unprejudiced opinion, is the overwhelming causative factor in the unprecedented success of your film laboratory;* (a) *because your people care more,* (b) *that your technological advances, both* (b1) *chemical and* (b2) *mechanical, have revolutionized film processing,* (c) *that your* (c1) *size and* (c2) *ultra-modern procedures have resulted in* (c3) *faster,* (c4) *more accurate customer servicing, and that,* (d) *if given half a chance, you will do even better?"*

In a firm, clear and unequivocal gurgle, the computer printed out Mr. Quinn's retort:

"I like your style!"

# QUINN LABS

380 Adelaide Street West/Toronto 2/368-3011

# BUST!

## THE CUBAN FILM FESTIVAL THAT WASN'T

### by Bernard Weiner

Several months ago, the United States government halted the First New York Festival of Cuban Films, under suspicion that its sponsor — American Documentary Films — was in violation of the Trading With the Enemy Act.

Such governmental censorship reveals much about problems facing radical film distributors in the United States.

Essentially, what happened was this:

Officials of ADF — a small, non-profit film distribution company with offices in New York and San Francisco — visited Cuba several years ago and, while there, suggested the idea of a Cuban Film Festival in the U.S. Sometime later, the Cuban Film Institute agreed to the idea. The films were shipped to Canada which, of course, maintains diplomatic relations with Cuba, so there was no hassle about their importation.

ADF and other small companies had for years been distributing Third World films without always obtaining U.S. import licenses, and television networks and major newsfilm organizations not only have had blanket license to import and show films from The Enemy (North Vietnam, North Korea, China, Cuba, etc.), but also a waiver permitting them to financially reimburse their sources.

Given this history of apparent government non-concern, ADF's International Director and organizer of the Festival, Michael Myerson, simply put the cans of film in his car and drove them across the border from Canada to the United States last fall. (He later applied for the import licenses, but the request was denied.)

Half-page ads began appearing in the *New York Times* and elsewhere, announcing the Cuban Film Festival for March 24-April 2 at the Olympia Theater near Spanish Harlem, invitations were being readied to members of Congress for the American Film Institute's showing scheduled for several weeks later, President Nixon was in China quoting Chairman Mao and drinking toasts with the former Enemy, the prestigious Museum of Modern Art in New York on March 11 and March 13 screened one of the best of the Cuban films, **Memories of Underdevelopment**, with no problems. All seemed calm.

Then, shortly after the U.S. State Department denied the visa requests of four Cuban directors — including the head of the Cuban Film Institute — to attend the Festival, the shit hit the fan.

For some reason or reasons, the decision was made — apparently at very high levels in the Nixon administration — not to permit the Cuban films to be shown. To avoid an international incident, the Festival's opening night was permitted to proceed, no doubt because there were 22 official United Nations delegates in attendance.

However, the following day, Treasury Department agents seized one of the films, **Days of Water**, as it was being brought into the theater, on the grounds that it had not been licensed. Other U.S. agents invaded the ADF offices in New York and San Francisco looking for the others. They're still looking.

The key question seems to be: why did the U.S. government act at that particular time against this particular festival, when it had exhibited little interest previously about Third World films being distributed and exhibited?

I asked that question of Jerry Stoll, ADF board chairman, at the group's ramshackle building in San Francisco.

"Eli Slotkin, Treasury's Foreign Assets Control Division officer in New York told me," said Stoll, "that 'We've overlooked all the other films you've brought in over the years, but when you organized a major film festival that people are really going to see, then we had to move in on you.' "

In other words, Stoll said, as long as your operation is regarded as ineffective, the government will leave you alone. But when you get into a position where your actions might actually make some sort of impact on people, then the government takes you seriously and comes down hard in repressive ways.

The essence of the Trading With the Enemy Act, passed by Congress in the early '60s in response to Cuba's socialist turn, states that no country deemed to be an "enemy" of the U.S. shall make money off items imported into this country.

But, according to Stoll, the films were donated to ADF by the Cuban Film Institute for the Festival and later distribution, with any profits going to the perennially broke ADF. "Not one dime will be going to the Cubans, directly or indirectly," said Stoll. To document its case, ADF turned over its complete Festival financial records to the Treasury Department.

Stoll argued that the Treasury Department has a double standard of enforcement. At the same time the Cuban Film Festival was being busted, the Communist Chinese revolutionary ballet **Red Detachment of Women**, was being shown on nationwide TV. "Somehow the government turns a blind eye towards the mass media when they acquire films from so-called 'enemy' countries, even paying money for them. But because we're small, and radical, and even though we don't pay anything, we get an investigation instead of a license."

The acting director of the Treasury Department's Foreign Assets Control Division, Stanley Sommerfield, denies any such discriminatory enforcement. ADF, he says, violated the law by importing the films without obtaining licenses, therefore the U.S. government had to act. Plain and simple.

Stoll sees further possible motives in the government's action. "I'm sure also," he said, "that the government action has something to do with the ITT case and Chile. Nixon doesn't want any boats rocked in Latin America right now, and wants to maintain the Cold War in the Western Hemisphere even as he appears to be reducing tensions with China and the Soviet Union." Furthermore, he speculated, the closing of the Cuban Film Festival might also be a means by which the Nixon administration covers its right-wing flank, by showing how tough it still is on Cuba, at the same time it is opening up friendly relations with China, which angers a lot of conservatives.

Though the government has taken no further legal action since the original bust, Stoll expects further trouble. "After all, we've been a small, but constant and growing thorn in their side since we began in 1967 — distributing films seen by millions of people which opposed the Vietnam war, films about the Black Panthers, the farm worker's union, and so on."

Stoll speculated that, given the government's string of court losses in many of the famous "conspiracy" cases of recent years, the real aim of the Nixon administration may not necessarily be to win a court victory over ADF, but to simply hassle it to death: tie it up in costly litigation, force it to lose money on canceled bookings, divert its attention from film distribution to dealing with the government's next steps, etc.

There is also a more ominous note to the government's continuing inquiry into ADF, according to David Harrington, president of the ADF office in San Francisco. "I'm beginning to understand why our attorney, Charles Garry, refers to the government's probe as a witch-hunt," he said. "While I was in the Treasury Department office here, observing while they went through the ADF financial records we turned over to them, it turned out that they were not simply interested in checks dealing with the Cuban Film Festival — which is the ostensible reason for their probe — but they were Xeroxing canceled checks associated with our latest project, a film on Daniel Ellsberg and the Pentagon Papers. They wanted names and signatures of people associated with that film."

ADF has taken two steps since the original bust. The first was to file a suit in federal court in New York which, if successful, will permit ADF to go ahead and distribute the Cuban films. Secondly, in an effort to demonstrate the absurdity of the government's case and its double-standard of enforcement, ADF organized several public screenings in New York recently of some of the very same Cuban films which are under ban. Except that these copies of the films have valid U.S. licenses.

But regardless of whether ADF is successful or not in its court fight to free the Cuban films for distribution, one thing is certain: that as ADF becomes more highly publicized — and, in a sense, it couldn't have asked for more publicity than it will get by the bust — it can expect more trouble from establishment forces. (ADF distributes several hundred political films, on a wide variety of topics; for a catalogue, write ADF, 336 West 84th Street, New York, N.Y. 10024.)

In the meantime, ADF — as with other radical outfits — carries on its slow but increasingly effective educational program to alter the consciousness and politics of America.

END

*Bernard Weiner, film critic for the San Francisco* Fault, *is a regular contributor to* Film Quarterly, Sight and Sound, *and* The Nation.

# ZAGREB:

## YUGOSLAV ANIMATED FILM / AN OVERVIEW

## by Ronald Holloway

Since Disney (and to an extent, even *before* him) the animated cartoon has come a long way. It is still looked upon by many as the bastard son of the movie industry — of little worth save to warm up the audience before the feature — and what respectability it has must be accorded to the genius of Disney, for he parlayed the *feature* cartoon into a multi-million dollar industry. What use after all, is the one to ten-minute cartoon except as a necessary little evil, sold to the exhibitor by the yard instead of by the idea?

A small portion of the movie public, discontent with animation's inferior position to the feature film, pleads the richness and versatility of the cartoon over the feature and the documentary. It points to the cartoon's potential: its ability both to tickle and humanize, to unleash waves of vitality and poetic expression, to temper a laugh with profound depths of meaning, wisdom and sensibility, all in a matter of seconds and at the disposition of the artist's fingertips. Besides Disney there are the esthetics of Bob Cannon and the Hubleys and UPA, the innovations of Canada's Norman McLaren and England's Halas and Batchelor, the way of Trnka and Borowczyk and Yoji Kuri and the computer cartoon, the experiments of the UCLA Workshop, and countless other ways.

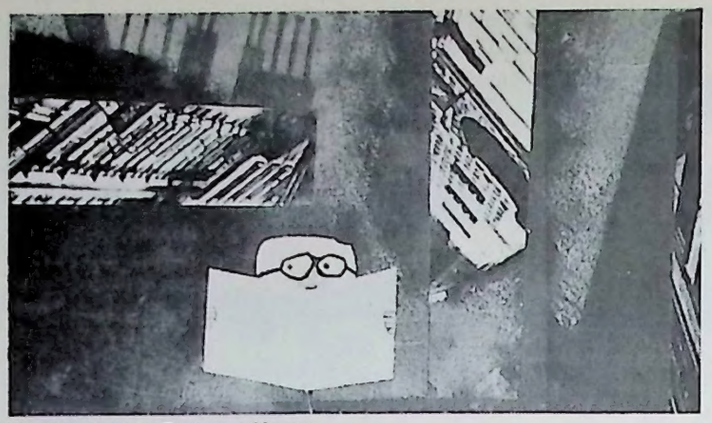
Zagreb Film is a little more special than the others. For one thing, it is not there just to entertain but to settle some of the problems of mankind: it creates fables on today's civilization. For another, it is the collective work of many working together for a single aim: to bring a message into the cartoon, a ray of light and hope into the despair of an industrialized, dehumanized society. In brief, it tries to give Mickey Mouse a life and soul of his own. It tries, ever so rashly and imperfectly, to transform present-day reality into the higher and nobler aspirations of man. It is the thinking-man's cartoon, concerned with art, culture, philosophy and theology, but in the common-man syntax of Shakespeare, Aristophanes and Rabelais.

Until a few years ago not many people knew about the small studio situated in the provinces of Europe amid the hills of Croatia. Yugoslav critics were not even aware of its presence until the studio's young artists — Dusan Vukotic, Nikola Kostelac, Vatroslav Mimica, Aleksandar Marks, Vladimir Jutrisa, Boris Kolar, Vjekoslav Kostanjsek, and Zlatko Bourek — walked away with laurels at the 1958 Cannes Film Festival.

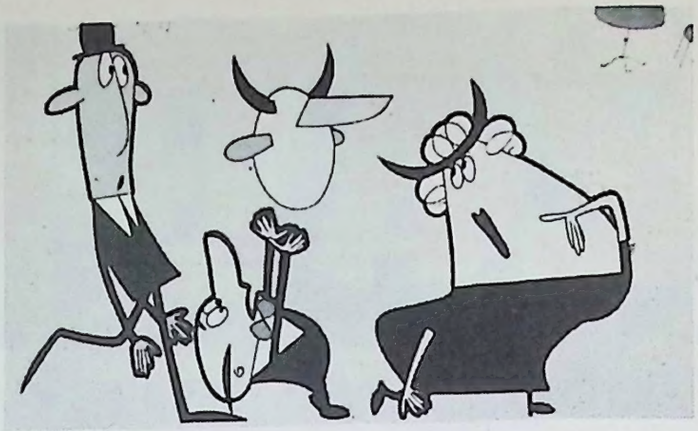
Today, Zagreb animation is still not very popular with its native audiences despite the hundred or more international prizes it has collected over the past fifteen years. For the average viewer, a humanistic parable is much harder to swallow than a series of anthropomorphic drawings. Then too the growth of the cartoon has been so rapid in the past few years that the socio-political nature of many of Zagreb's finest make them difficult for any thinking man to swallow whole without discomfort, much less the average, commercially orientated public.

The Zagreb cartoon as it is known today had its beginnings in the illustrations accompanying the Postwar satirical journal, *Kerempuh*, edited by the amazing and ingenious Fadil Hadzic (known as the "Cocteau of Yugoslavia"). Hadzic knew that the journal's wide circulation owed its pre-eminent position to its satirical cartoons. He also knew that his crew of young illustrators had to be kept busy in between assignments, and what better way than to attempt an animated cartoon. No one had the slightest idea how Disney made his stuff, but one talented designer, Walter Neugebauer, figured it couldn't be much different than photographing a couple thousand drawings! Some twenty thousand drawings, two years of sweat labor, and seventeen minutes of playing time later — **The Big Meeting** was born in 1949, drawing its inspiration from the Yugoslav breakaway from the Soviet Bloc. The Russian minister of propaganda, who headed the attack on "Tito Nationalism," was depicted as the biggest frog among other frogs meeting in Albania to send a swarm of mosquitoes to Yugoslavia to sting the recalcitrant nation into submission. The cartoon was half-Disney, half-Neugebauer, without the benefit of color or any technical sophistication. The makeshift camera was rigged up out of an airplane engine. Nevertheless, the film had charm, was a great success at home, and opened the door for Hadzic to start another career as head of a brand new animation studio, Duga Film.

Duga Film was founded on the principle of fair competition. One unit was organized under Walter and Norbert Neugebauer (a Disney unit) and another under young Dusan Vukotic, who had his own ideas on how a cartoon was made after screening old Fleischer and Oswald originals found in the film archive. Vukotic was influenced in turn by Czecholovakia's Jiri Trnka, who had spent the months in Prague immediately after liberation working to help found a new Czech school of cartoon films. Trnka was little touched by the fifteen-year domination of animation by Disney, and simply supplanted anthropomorphism with a non-interchangeable world of man as man and animals as animals, adding the typical Trnka moral that everyone needs the help of the weakest and the smallest. Among Trnka's cartoons of this period, two — **Grandpa Planted A Beet** (1945) and **The Animals and the Brigands** (1946) — are fairy tales and little more than animated book illustrations; but two others — the parody **The Gift** (1946) and the satire **Perak and the SS** (1946) — are a distinct breakaway from the Disney mold for the first time, and were to have widespread influence in both Europe and America. **The Gift** is a parody on the feature film, full of surprises and rapid changes of scenery and action, but underneath lay a criticizing of the ideals of bourgeois society amid the usual *kitsch* of movie trappings. **The Gift** was too sophisticated for its own good: rarely understood by contemporary audiences, it has since received the appreciation it deserves. **Perak and the SS** is political satire revolving around the antics of a chimney sweep and



**The Inspector Returns Home**



**The Egg**

a snooping Nazi collaborator, easily understood and enjoyed after the tensions of the Occupation: social criticism again is very strong. Vukotic first borrowed Trnka's thirst for national figures and non-anthropomorphism (best exemplified in the folk tales), but later turned to the master's flair for social satire and parody as the Yugoslav nation developed into an independent bridge between East and West.

Vukotic's work at Duga Film is not particularly noteworthy and in its own way heavily authoritarian. He invented a comical public official, Kico, who goes about the country in **How Kico Was Born** (1951) and **The Haunted Castle at Dudinci** (1952) righting wrongs in a happy-go-lucky manner. Next to the amateur imitations of Disney in the Neugebauer unit, they at least had a refreshing quality. It was probably Vukotic's good fortune that Duga Film died after a year (the government funds were re-allocated to build schools), for under dire circumstances the only possibility for his unit to keep working was to turn to advertising films. In the new economy, business ventures and competition were being encouraged, with the distinct advantage that movie theatre advertising was becoming the surest and fastest way to get a product across to the public. Vukotic (like his creation, Kico) wandered across the country seeking commissions for himself and his colleagues (Kostelac, Marks, Jutrisa, Kolar, Kostanjsek, and Bourek), writing quick scripts (30-second to one-minute cartoons) overnight in hotel rooms, and developing the principles of "reduced animation" out of sheer lack of the proper number of cels (transparent celluloids carrying the drawings to be photographed). Cartoons that normally required 12,000 to 15,000 drawings were reduced to 4,000 to 5,000, taking on in the process a daring, avant-garde surface and a dynamic inner tension rarely experienced in the cartoon film until then. Despite the innovations — indeed, because of them — the cartoon ads were an immediate success, and Zagreb Film offered a new home to the young artists amid its educational and documentary film ventures.

Armed with a new approach to animation, and in search of new themes to apply it to, the Zagreb "school" burst upon the international scene at the Oberhausen and Cannes film festivals of 1958. In addition to the lessons learned from early Fleischer and Oswald, the Trnka experiments, and the radical innovations of limiting the number of drawings, the young studio was showing the results of being introduced to distinct Western influences. The first of these was the American entertainment movie, chiefly the Western and the gangster film, introduced immediately after the war. Trnka's satire of the Western in the puppet film **Song of the Prairie** (1949) was picked up by Vukotic for his own **Cowboy Jimmie** (1957). Another trend from America was the UPA breakaway from Disney, which was first seen in Yugoslavia when **The Four Poster** was privately screened, showing the animation bridge sequences by the Hubleys. UPA only confirmed what the studio had learned from Trnka, but it made a new type of animation the more acceptable and exciting.

Disney, UPA, Trnka, modern graphics, Kathe Kollwitz and George Grosz, satire, parody, parable — a strange mixture for a young studio! It was a healthy and enviable beginning. Dusan Vukotic used his satire on the gangster film **Concerto For Sub-Machine Gun** (1958), unimaginable in the American cartoon, to branch out into the completely independent **Piccolo** (1959), the final word in neighborly boorishness. A bird's melody tying the neighbor's friendship at the beginning of the cartoon drifts into a battle of musical noises and distortions at the end, a theme of vengeance and cold reality echoed in later cartoons down through **Ersatz** (1961), parodying plastic beach toys, and **Play** (1962), a parable on the Berlin Wall constructed around a children's game. Vukotic is the direct heir of Trnka, whose morals are a cool distillation of the cruel games people like to play.

By contrast, the cartoons of Vatroslav Mimica, executed through the talents of designer Aleksandar Marks and animator Vladimir Jutrisa, speak of loftier problems and distresses of the human soul. Mimica was responsible for the studio's best films in its early period. **Alone** (1957) is concerned with a sensitive soul frightened by the vision of office employees turning into typewriters, a vision that develops into a nightmare as a factory turning out screws in **Perpetuum & Mobile, Ltd.** (1961) also turns workers into screws in the same process. The trilogy is brought to a close in **Everyday Chronicle** (1962), the best film of the Mimica-Marks team, deploring the ultimate absurdity of industrialization as a blind man's seeing-eye dog is sucked into a factory assembly line without anyone noticing. Mimica stretched the "mature" cartoon as far as it could go in a narrative style by reworking the traditional romantic view of man in a dehumanizing environment, while prompting from Marks a rich pattern of paint and collage to render the story visually tactile. Together they also parodied the British detective film in **The Inspector Returns Home** (1959).

Despite these major innovations in the studio's drive for international acclaim, it wasn't until Vlado Kristl happened upon the scene that things really began to move. Already in the early sixties Zagreb Film was suffering from hardening of the arteries: instead of the Golden Age which was predicted (and claimed), a bureaucratic freeze took hold on any "dangerous" individuality and forms of free expression. Vukotic and Mimica were untouchable as "artistic directors," but to keep the rest down the director of a cartoon was to be predetermined by the studio's front office. And these honors went mostly to cooperative young yes-men fresh out of the city's Drama Academy.

Picture Vlado Kristl, an abstract artist of some renown and a pioneer on the staff of *Kerempuh*, who left Yugoslavia after being hounded for "decadent" preferences in art, returning to Zagreb upon reading of his colleagues' success at the Cannes festival, and expecting of course to be treated as an equal among equals. He was immediately placed under the supervision of "artistic directors" who took most of the credit for his first two films: **The Great Jewel Robbery** (1959), a polished spoof of Vukotic's all-too-serious **Concerto For Sub-Machine Gun** of the year before; and **La Peau De Chagrin**

(1960), a superb *art nouveau* interpretation of Balzac's tale of self-deception and nightmare horror. Both of these cartoons rank among the most successful in the Zagreb catalogue, but neither were to reach the heights of his first (and only) independent cartoon, **Don Quixote** (1961).

Kristl commanded every phase of the work on **Don Quixote** from start to finish, and it was clear from the beginning that he was out to vanquish his enemies. Rattling around in the guise of a half-fastened tin can, the valiant warrior with his dirt-smudged companion outmanoeuvers his bug-like foes, and defeats them with ease. Kristl took first prize at the Oberhausen Festival, refused to work any longer at the Zagreb Studio, and left Yugoslavia for Germany. Many thought this meant the end of cartoon-making in Zagreb. Vukotic and Mimica shortly thereafter entered the feature film, Kostanjsek emigrated to Germany, and the "artistic directors" went as fast as they came.

It was the best thing that ever happened to Zagreb Film. A new policy was introduced in which the still young staff of designers and animators could follow whatever inspirations led them. In 1964, one year after the crisis, Borivoj Dovnikovic burst onto the scene with **Without Title**, a spoof on over-extended movie titles; Zlatko Grgic with **A Visit From Space**, about a space creature who is taught to slurp apples (he fills the Milky Way with apple cores on his way home); Boris Kolar with **Woof-Woof**, satirizing prejudice in the animal world with kittens that bark and puppies that meow (to the consternation of their parents); Ante Zaninovic with **The Trumpet**, kidding the human ego with a trumpet that expands when blown (it bursts!); and Pavao Stalter, whose **The Fifth** is an interfering tuba winning over a string quartet with its persistent bonk (Grgic helped on the direction). These marvelously alive cartoons with hardly a shred of storyline surpassed expectations in a matter of a few minutes of playing time, relying mostly on gag-building, the unexpected twist, or the crazy zig-zag of a line to get the joke across.

In the next year, 1965, Dovnikovic, Grgic and Zaninovic were to outdo themselves with ease and confidence. Dovnikovic's **Ceremony** hits hard at tyranny as a group of awkard, lovable "little guys" (Dovnikovic's standard character) pose not for a photograph (as expected), but for a firing squad. Grgic's **The Musical Pig** also lets the world know where he stands in depicting a juicy tenor pursued by "music lovers" for his bacon instead of his extraordinary talents. **The Wall** by Zaninovic shows two men, one passive and the other irritated, facing an enormous wall — which is finally opened up by the latter's skull, only to reveal another beyond! Each of these cartoons were intelligent steps in the right direction, for the most part following directly in the footsteps of Vlado Kristl.

1966 found Mimica returning to the studio by way of two scripts, which were put to good use by two other "discovered" talents, Aleksandar Marks and Nedeljko Dragic, waiting for the right inspiration to come along. Marks and Vladimir Jutrisa combined efforts on **The Fly**, perhaps the most successful of all Zagreb cartoons. An unnerving parable on man coming to grips with the cosmic universe in the form of a gigantic fly, man and fly eventually reach a compromise and take their bows together. Marks and Jutrisa immediately followed their success with a sustained trilogy: **Sisyphus** (1967), a philosophical meditation on the uncertainties of the cosmic universe; and **The Spider** (1969), deploring the weakness in man to submit and conform in an oppressive environment. Dragic, on the other hand, took Mimica's parable on the harnessing of technological forces, **Tamer of Wild Horses**, and blended it in with his personal feelings of nostalgia and melancholy, promise and doom, presented in his earlier flawed **Elegy** (1965).

His next two films, entirely his own, follow this same line with the major difference that they are set in the more unpredictable world of the newspaper cartoon or comic strip. **Diogenes Perhaps** (1967) features a Chaplinesque character scurrying through a series of Saul Steinberg situations looking for something genuine in this world to applaud; sad to say, the little fellow finds nothing. In **Passing Days** (1969) Dragic is at his sharpest and blackest, recounting the misfortunes of an ordinary Joe in his bathrobe prevented from reading the paper by interrupting policemen, snoopers (a skeleton is found in his closet!), salesmen, tanks, waves of demonstrators, his screeching kids, and wife's lovers — topped off by an angelic fairy in oversized shoes offering him an exploding apple. If **The Fly** was Zagreb's most successful cartoon (as claimed), **Passing Days** is its most powerful.

The familiar tone in the "message" cartoons developed since 1966 is the Kafka-esque touch of distorted reality and frightening isolation. Besides Dragic and Marks-Jutrisa, other cartoonists were similarly infected. Boris Kolar wrote the script for Marks's and Jutrisa's **Sisyphus** at the same time as he was creating the puzzling **Discoverer** (1967), half-satirizing, half-deploring man's weakness to dispel the darkness around him. In **Dialogue** (1968) his formula becomes even more abstruse, blending live-action with pop art animation in a tale on human paralysis. The painter Pavao Stalter (working again with Grgic as animator) sketches in **Boxes** (1967) the endless waste of time and effort humanity puts itself through without apparent rhyme and reason: two men pop in and out of safety match boxes, complicated when a third appears. Stalter's **Masque of the Red Death** (1969) is completely hand-painted (requiring two years), and is a remarkable evocation of Poe's chilling tale of famine and death.

In contrast and somewhat in opposition to the parable are the more refreshing gag-and-nonsense cartoons of Zlatko Grgic, Borivoj Dovnikovic and Ante Zaninovic. Zlatko Grgic developed very, very slowly. He was in the Vukotic unit at the beginning as an "in-betweener," then rose to head animator on a number of projects with Vukotic and Vrbanic. Allowed to go his own way in 1964, his "touch" is first evident in the rapport between the little girl and the space creature in **A Visit From Space** (1964). **The Musical Pig** (1965) is not a sustained work, but shows him mastering the timing of a gag, which shines brilliantly in the take-off on Chuck Jones and Tex Avery in **Little And Big** (1966). His gags in **Tolerance** (1967) echo the fun in **The Fifth** (1964), hinting that intolerance in national, social, religious and political contexts is a runaway community expression, seldom a fault of the committed individualist.

About this time, Grgic branched out into his most fruitful and rewarding experiments: the nonsense cartoon. **Inventor of Shoes** (1967) was the modest beginnings of the Professor Balthasar series, about an eccentric scientist who creates a pair of shoes to give confidence to a bird who can't fly, a bumbling athlete who keeps falling all over himself, and a postman with sore feet. The friends later repay the professor by visiting him in a hospital (after an experiment went haywire) — the situations are absurd and delightful, with unexpected turns and twists all along the way. Grgic worked out a series on Professor Balthasar with Kolar and Zaninovic, but as successful as it is the situations lack much of the ingenious nonsense found in the first one. Perhaps in self-defence Grgic shows the way in **Twiddle-Twaddle** (1968), made independently at the same time as the series was taking shape. This is cartoon absurdity at its best: animals with big shoes and three heads, a dirt smudge with coat-hangers for legs, an alligator suitcase imitating a centipede. It is just about the thing a four-year-old Michelangelo would dream up. Grgic's latest work is with the National Film Board of Canada, where he did the drawings for Don Arioli's **Hot Stuff** (1971) on fire prevention.

Dovnikovic's presence was appreciated by the younger cartoonists as they were breaking in on their own, for he too was being discovered in **Without Title** (1964) after long years of service going back to *Kerempuh* days. He followed this with the ironic **Ceremony** (1965), and got even with the military again in **Krek** (also called **The Sergeant**) (1967), in which a pint-sized Schweik and his pet frog drive their tormentor into a frenzy by retreating into a wonderland of dreams and natural beauty. **The Flower Lovers** (1970) is another ironic comment on the world's preference for the harsh and violent over the delicate and lovely, in this case exploding flowers over natural ones. Zaninovic got his start working under Kristl, then immediately made his reputation with the sardonic **The Wall** (1965). His characters are usually stumpy and ugly, moving in a slow circle to a final, disastrous conclusion. The best are in **Of Holes and Corks** (1967), satirizing the fate of egoists who play musical volcanoes in a closed, isolated world (politicians and government leaders come first to mind), and the contributions he made to Professor Balthasar.

A few cartoonists refuse to fit into a mold, falling outside the generalities already outlined. One is Zlatko Bourek, whose original excursions into the folklore of his native Slavonia (a part of Croatia) produced the superbly rendered **Dancing Songs** (1966) and **Captain Arbanas Marko** (1967). Another is the shy recluse of the studio, Zvonimir Loncaric, a painter and sculptor who did the design work for Dragutin Vunak's **Between Lips and Glass** (1968) and made independently **Escape** (1969). Both of these cartoons are difficult to describe, being as subtly poetic as Bourek's are alive and colorful. The later Vukotic cartoons, **A Stain on the Conscience** (1968), **Opera Cordis** (1968), and **Ars Gratia Artis** (1969), are definitely not the result of conversation with colleagues but psychological explorations into the inner self combining live action with animation. These experiments may eventually open up new lines of studio activity, or at least be integrated into the collective image of Zagreb Film. Presently, their major strength lies in the satellite relationship to the studio's dominant trends, as do a number of one-minute mini cartoons used for practice by the young beginners (Milan Blazekovic's **Largo** series particularly stands out). It is perhaps better they never be integrated.

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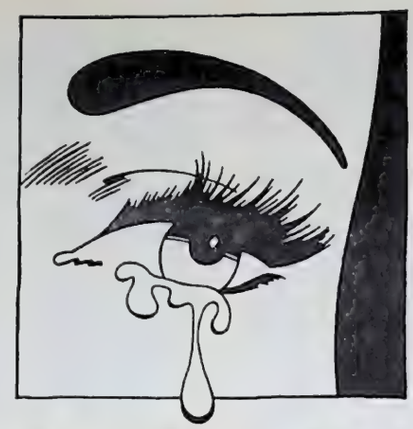

# SEX, MARRIAGE, & THE MOVIES

## ...MORE OF THE SAME

Mike Nichols' **Carnal Knowledge** is his third film dealing with the discontents and obsessions of marriage and sex, and it is one of the few American treatments of the subject written especially for the screen and created by a serious director. It has received critical and popular attention as much for its social commentary as for its artistry but, as in **The Graduate**, the skill and beauty of the production have served to conceal the shallowness of both the characterizations and the social criticism.

This is perhaps not so much a criticism of Nichols and writer Jules Feiffer, as of an entire group of films dealing with marriage in America, for **Carnal Knowledge** is, in many ways, a most conventional film. It owes much in both form and content to a group of mostly commercial comedies and dramas of the sixties. Although it is more cynical about the character of the American male, and more bitter in its treatment of the hostility between the sexes, **Carnal Knowledge** shares the limitations of its predecessors. Restriction of the film to affluent, upper middle class people, concentration on traditional stereotypes (the don juan, the weak, dependent woman, the idealistic young man), and avoidance of any of the sharper problems of sex discrimination and hostility (poverty, waste and despair) practically insure that the film will not differ too much from the slick comedies of the sixties.

It was through these comedies that the changed attitudes toward marriage, romance and sex became clear. **Divorce, American Style** was one of the first to attack middle class marriage and to question the old "they lived happily ever after" endings. A cynical view of marriage and of old fashioned virtue was also reflected in **A Guide for the Married Man** and **The Secret Life of an American Wife**, which suggested that happiness lay in occasional infidelity. John Cassavetes' grim **Faces** demolished this scheme, but two slightly later pictures, **All the Loving Couples** and **Bob & Carol & Ted & Alice** suggested happiness through group sex. The discontents of this solution, as well as the exaggerated "honesty" of Bob and Carol, were followed by a more drastic solution in **The Happy Ending**, which concludes by rejecting sex and/or romance, and which ends with the heroine leaving home and husband to find a job and get an education.

This attempt at change with its stress on feminine independence and autonomy has not proved appealing. Later films dealing with marriage, like **Diary of a Mad Housewife, Carnal Knowledge** and **Five Easy Pieces** (a common law arrangement) have returned to the view that it is only through sexual relationships and marriage that the personalities of female characters can be defined. In each of these films, there is almost no alternative for the women but marriage, and either economic dependence, social pressure or a failure of nerve is shown

BY JANICE LAW TRECKER

as the reason for their attachment to the institution.

Compared with their European counterparts, these films show a tendency toward caricature. This is particularly true of their female characters, because women are consistently shown with more limited possibilities than males. Women are strictly limited to roles utilizing their sexual functions; the alternatives to housewife are either mistress or prostitute. As for the menfolk, they are only slightly more differentiated, most being almost interchangeable variations of the American businessman. Equally superficial is the treatment of the family. Despite the assumption that Americans have a passion for children and for "child-centered" homes and marriages, children in most films are unimportant. Almost all movie couples have children, but they are either grown and away at school, cared for by servants or simply waiting off-screen. Children are rarely the focus of much emotion, and they resemble the expensive furnishings which surround their parents — accoutrements of the good life, nothing more.

The treatment of children is interesting and revealing because it indicates how far the conception of marriage has departed from tradition. The characters show remarkably little interest in such goals as raising a family or even in building a stable partnership. Marriage is seen in primarily a psychological, not a social, context. The couples' ultimate desire is for self-expression, and marriage and/or extramarital sex is a means toward individualism. Nonetheless, marriage remains necessary, sometimes simply through force of convention, more often for psychological security. Few of the characters are, after all, rebels. They show no desire for change in their social attitudes or in the form of their lives. They simply want to satisfy their own desires for romance, spontaneity, and happiness without disturbing their social position or the traditional patterns of their society.

The smugness of the characters, the lack of real rebels, and the fact that most of these pictures were made for consumption by the types they describe blunts social criticism. In spite of their limitations, the films do show changes in assumptions and mores, and indicate a restiveness with traditional ideas like fidelity. They show an ambivalent attitude toward the ideas of home and family, and they reveal, even through the stereotyped characters, the growing uneasiness of the American woman. Her discontent is far sharper than the male's sporadic desire to wander, and it is no surprise that the most radical break with the assumptions of woman's place and the importance of marriage comes from the heroine of **The Happy Ending.**

Within the context of **Divorce, American Style**, the only viable reasons for marriage are economic: divorce is simply too complicated and costly.

A look back at the cluster of films from **Divorce, American Style** to **The Happy Ending** makes it easy to see why Jean Simmons says good-by to her husband on the steps of the local college. **Divorce, American Style** was an odd mixture of convention, clichés and satire, but its cynical view of marriage was to be typical of this group of films. The plot followed the efforts of a wealthy California couple to obtain a divorce and, particularly, the husband's efforts to avoid paying alimony by marrying off his ex-wife. The characters were all a nasty, shallow-minded lot, although the casting of Debbie Reynolds and Dick Van Dyke was an unexpected and amusing touch. Both perform as expected, but in atypical roles, and their bland, pleasant presences add interest to their greed and selfishness.

It is too bad that **Divorce, American Style**, which was suitably cold-blooded in its treatment of the Harmons' marriage and children, did not follow its observations on middle class marriage to their logical conclusions. Within the context of the film, the only viable reasons for marriage are economic: divorce is simply too complicated and costly. Furthermore, all the characters operate on the assumption that the basic reason for divorce is remarriage, with the prospect of another tedious sequence of disillusionment and divorce to face again. Unlike its prototype, Germi's **Divorce Italian Style**, the American film inconsistently grafts a happy ending onto its cynical depiction of marriage and divorce. The Harmons eventually justify their reconciliation with a few platitudes about the meaning of life and the evils of materialism which ill conceal either their venal natures or the cliché ending.

Divorce being impossible or undesirable, other sixties comedies attempted to show that there are ways to make the institutions bearable. Walter Matthau in **Guide for the Married Man** and Anne Jackson in **The Secret Life of an American Wife** sought to prove that they were still young and desirable. In both films, infidelity represented the excitement and romance that had gradually been drained out of

In **The Secret Life of an American Wife** infidelity represents the excitement and romance that has gradually been drained out of marriage.

marriage. While **Guide** was a breezy farce where sex was fun, **The Secret Life of an American Wife** had more serious overtones. For the heroine, sex was a test — of youth, attractiveness, sophistication and personal worth. Like most of the characters in this group of films, Victoria Layton, the heroine, had few ways to measure herself as a person beyond her desirability. Wondering if she has been infected by the dullness of suburban living, she attempts to pass as a high-priced call girl to a sexy actor (incongruously played by Walter Matthau). There are a number of unpleasant aspects to the plot, including the fact that Victoria's husband is the actor's publicity man and, therefore, chiefly responsible for his image as a dynamic lover. The one thing which gives the picture some resonance is the general consensus that physical attractiveness is of primary importance to women. Since this is the assumption not only of **The Secret Life of an American Wife**, but of most of these comedies and dramas, Mrs. Layton's adventures are not quite so nonsensical as they appear on the surface.

The importance of feminine beauty and also the importance of home and marriage to women is underscored by John Cassavetes'

At best, sex can provide a momentary relief from boredom and loneliness for the characters of **Faces**, but it cannot touch the root of their problems, their spiritual emptiness.

**Faces**, which also uses infidelity as a test of youth and beauty. On the verge of a divorce, an unhappy middle aged couple attempt, like Victoria Layton, to prove that they are still sexually attractive. The wife, however, takes her brief affair considerably more seriously than her husband takes his. She attempts suicide.

The main interest of the film is in the frustrations, longings and betrayals of both partners, and in the emptiness and coldness of the middle aged businessmen and their wives. Cassavetes is extremely pessimistic about their chances for happiness. At best, sex can provide a momentary relief from boredom and loneliness, but it cannot touch the root of the characters' problems, their spiritual emptiness.

It is interesting that the only two hopeful or pleasant characters are traditional figures, the call girl and the amoral young man. Unlike the nervous middle aged women, the call girl is gracious and kindly, while the boy has a *joie de vivre* which is strikingly absent from the rest of the men. Yet neither provides a practical alternative. Sympathetic acting by Gena Rowlands and Seymour Cassell cannot conceal the stereotypes behind these characters — stereotypes which probably have little relation to the actual lives of people who subsist on their sexual charms. Furthermore, their lives have their own disadvantages. The prostitute's gentle spirit is at odds with her profession, and the boy's lack of responsibility leads to misery for others.

The grim morality of **Faces** found no favor with the inhabitants of **Bob & Carol & Ted & Alice** and **All the Loving Couples**, yet each film reveals the human flaws which make for the discontents of marriage, and each suggests the limitations of infidelity as a solution.

The shared confidences of the characters in **Bob & Carol & Ted & Alice** give them a spurious sense of intimacy and convince them of their tolerance and sophistication.

In **Bob & Carol & Ted & Alice**, the characters want to be better; they want better marriages, better sex lives, more happiness. Young, handsome and rich, they still feel that there is something lacking in their lives. Bob and Carol, the leaders of the quartet, come back from a 24-hour marathon convinced that real happiness can only come through "honesty" and "openness." They rapidly translate their supposedly spiritual insights into the more easily manageable terms of physical satisfaction. They have affairs and are "honest" about them. Unlike the characters in **Guide for the Married Man** and **The Secret Life of an American Wife**, the whole meaning of their infidelities lies in their confessions. Their shared confidences give them a spurious sense of intimacy and convince them of their tolerance and sophistication.

If Bob and Carol are not caught in the middle aged despair of **Faces**, neither do they have the casual attitude toward sex which distinguishes characters in the new "youth films," although they try hard to develop it. They make an earnest effort to adapt a philosophy of candor and tolerance to their middle class lives, and in their dress, speech and manner, they try to conform to a hip way of life. Their attempts break down when they contemplate a sexual orgy with their best friends, Ted and Alice. Basically conservative, Bob and Carol are faddists, not voluptuaries, and the film ends uneasily with a return to the status quo.

The satire in **Bob & Carol & Ted & Alice** was light hearted. It remained for **All the Loving Couples**, a low budget film which set up a lucrative base camp between sexploitation and commercial film, to draw the conclusions that previous comedies had only suggested. **All the Loving Couples** gives one of the most acerbic pictures of marriage and sex prior to **Carnal Knowledge**. Aside from the coarse jokes, inserted through double entendre commercials and a ridiculous parody stag movie, **All the Loving Couples** is closer to pictures like **Faces** than to either **Bob & Carol & Ted & Alice** or the sexploitation pictures which it superficially resembles. Sex is an obsession with the characters, but so is marriage. The need for some sort of emotional security predominates even over the need for excitement, and all the couples are pathetically attached to their marriages — even the stormy ones. One of the wives declares that it is better to "swing along with her husband than to have him off on his own," and the host of the party, a clownish, muscle-bound oaf who turns out to be impotent, claims that he holds the mate swapping parties in order to keep his wife.

Although the characters in **All the Loving Couples** seem to have reduced relations between the sexes to physical pleasure, they are filled with guilts and longings.

The movie takes a dim view of both sexes. The men are vain, boastful and insensitive. At best they are honest, at worst, stupid. The women cater to their vanity and so manipulate them. The wives range from shrewish to sympathetic, but as a group they are cynical and prone to despise the husbands they struggle so energetically to keep. Although these characters seem to have reduced the relations between the sexes to physical pleasure, they are filled with guilts and longings, and the basic motivating force in their lives is not pleasure but fear of loneliness. Like the couple in **Faces**, these people chafe under the boredom and emptiness of their lives, yet their sexual adventures are a pathetic attempt to maintain the very existences they find so tiresome.

It is important that none of the women in **All the Loving Couples**, or in any of the other films discussed, work or even have any hobbies or interests. Unlike their European counterparts, who are shown as doctors, clerks, artists, politicians or writers, they have no committments outside their homes, and their domestic employments are inadequate to fill their time. This combination of economic dependence and boredom makes the women parasitic, grasping and insecure. Their continued comfort depends upon their feminine wiles, and they exert every effort to develop the sexual attractiveness which will enable them to control their husbands.

This relationship between the sexes is amplified in **The Happy Ending**, a film with an ambivalent attitude toward women, and a rather confused sense of purpose. A study of a woman alcoholic who lives in romantic daydreams based on old movies, and sustained by pills and vodka, the film concludes that work and independence are essential to self respect and maturity.

The film contrasts the alcoholic wife (Jean Simmons) with her capable companion-housekeeper, her vigorous mother, and her quiet, too quickly grown up daughter. She is seen as one of a group of women in their late thirties and early forties whose development has been inexplicably arrested. The energies of their lives are completely directed toward the attainment and preservation of youth and beauty, and the most desperate of these ladies spend their time in heroic struggles with the beauty shop, the hair dresser and the health studio. They take hormones and visit expensive diet camps and beauty spas. They get their faces lifted and their busts enlarged. In between these bouts with time and age, they drink, smoke, take pills, bicker over endless card games, and cry.

The total atrophy of these women's intellectual lives has its counterpart in their husbands' lack of sensitivity and imagination. Absorbed in their businesses and diverted by an occasional extra-marital fling, the men in this picture are thoroughly dull, crass and materialistic. Despite their greater stability and productivity, they, like their wives, are unattractive, half-formed personalities.

Less elegant than Godard's **The Married Woman, The Happy Ending** makes the same point, that our culture's insistence on eroticism as the basis of femininity can destroy the human potential of women, and both films see advertising and other media images as the chief means for transmitting this concept. While Godard found a very cool technique and a novel form for an examination of his heroine's life, Richard Brooks has relied on a traditional, and heavy handed, approach. His film lacks subtlety, and while criticizing the assumptions of past film romances, it looks and sounds very much like them. In one way, however, **The Happy Ending** is superior to the French film, and that is in its central character. While Godard was consistent in making his heroine little more than a passive example of the ultra-feminine woman, her chance for growth and change seemed negated. The Simmons character in **The Happy Ending**, while more melodramatic and less elegant, is ultimately forceful enough to break out of the existence which was destroying her. Unfortunately, neither the script nor the direction was able to develop a film which could present her development in an original or effective manner.

The total atrophy of the intellectual lives of the women in **The Happy Ending** has its counterpart in their husbands' lack of sensitivity and imagination.

**The Happy Ending** marked a break with popular films dealing with middle class marriage and sex in suggesting one of the rare alternatives to marriage as a life goal for women. Later films have not developed this theme. **Diary of a Mad Housewife** presents its heroine as completely dependent upon her husband, despite the fact that she is well educated and obviously from an affluent family. Other films have had minor atypical female characters, but they are rarely presented as desirable personalities. **Five Easy Pieces** presents one of the rare exceptions, Catherine, the musician, but even she is going to marry a man she doesn't love. Although Catherine is an attractive character, she is more than offset by the weak, stupid and pathetic Rayette, who is psychologically and socially, if not economically, dependent on the hero.

Feiffer's script for **Carnal Knowledge** insists on the mutual hostility of the goals and aims of the sexes, and on the fundamental agreement underlying their differences.

**Carnal Knowledge** is even more typical in its conception of female characters. The one woman who refuses to play the martyr to the two insufferable men is presented as cold, domineering and "unfeminine." The other women abandon work, ambition and even independence with marriage or a serious affair. Bobbie, the model, resigns herself to sleeping most of the day (one is tempted to say in order to be properly dependent) while Susan, perhaps the only appealing character, is simply dropped from the film once she is married. The only other independent woman is the prostitute who manipulates Jonathan, and earns her fee by catering to his fantasies of masculine superiority.

The Jules Feiffer script follows its prototypes in other respects as well. It insists on the mutual hostility of the goals and aims of the sexes, and on the fundamental agreement that underlies their differences. This is the belief that sexuality is the primary determinant of personal worth and that there is no way to revitalize or change one's life beyond changes in one's sexual attitudes, partners or acts. If the picture is to be considered in any way important, it is that **Carnal Knowledge** bluntly clarifies what previous pictures had tended only to imply: the polarity of the sexes, the hostility of their aims, and the foolish and tragic results of attempting to dehumanize one's sexual partners in order to enhance masculinity (and, by extension, femininity).

The two heroes present a culmination of a series of previous film characters, but not any new departure. Their story does, however, remove the glamour which lingered around extra-marital affairs in the sixties comedies. In **Carnal Knowledge**, and to a certain extent in **Diary of a Mad Housewife** and **Five Easy Pieces**, sex is simply no solution at all to the problems of existence. Happiness, or the more modest ambition of avoiding unhappiness, is neither a matter of chalking up an impressive series of conquests nor of naively seeking some illusionary "spiritual" relationship. Still less can happiness possibly reside in the old fashioned sort of marriage. **Carnal Knowledge** is completely pessimistic.

This pessimism is hardly surprising. Like most of the American films to deal with marriage, **Carnal Knowledge** has limited its view and its characters so severely that their failures are a foregone conclusion. So long as men and women are presented as weak, vapid personalities, and so long as the films' view of the position of American women reflects Victorian ideals instead of 20th century realities, there seems little chance for any alternative to the presentation of an obsessional view of marriage and/or sex.

It is interesting, in fact, to notice the extent to which filmmakers have concentrated on one small class in American society — the affluent "nouveau riche," and have resolutely avoided many of the real problems with marriage, family law, public policy and the position of women. It is also interesting to examine the efforts made to conceal the unique position of the characters. Despite the plush surroundings of all these films, every effort is made to depict the couples as "just folks." Unlike the characters in some of the better filmed plays, like Albee's **Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf** and Tennessee Williams' creations, the movie couples lack exotic psychologies, brilliant talents and shameful flaws. Bored and empty, they are paltry heroes, and their lack of culture and humane education deprives them even of the elegance that puts a gloss on decadent Europeans.

The female characters, if neither intellectually nor spiritually inferior to their male counterparts, are less realistically presented and are, therefore, even more unsatisfactory. From these films one would never guess that 40% of America's work force is female, or that most of America's working women labor in the least desirable and poorest paid employments. Preservation of youth and beauty is the primary concern with many of these screen heroines, but for many of America's female population, a decent job, a chance for advancement and some way to balance the demands of home, job and family is the primary concern. Traditionally, however, a good deal of American social commentary has focused on the problems of a small group of white, affluent females, and has discussed the problems of the majority of American women from their standpoint. American films have simply continued, and even exaggerated, that tradition. It is scarcely necessary to point out that few rational or humane solutions to the "problems" of American women have emerged from this traditional approach.

Despite all their limitations, the group of films culminating with **Carnal Knowledge** provide a devastating look at what we are told is the norm in American society. Although their criticisms are often implicit, the inoffensive mediocre characters, the luxurious settings and the cliché plots still reveal the emptiness of the life depicted, and the futility of the characters' pursuit of sensuality. They reflect a group of people who have lost the old ideals but failed to gain any new ones. In so doing, they reflect a segment of our society which, despite wealth and success, has lost vitality, character and purpose.

This lack of new ideals and values often appears to be a weakness in the films as well as in their characters. The extremely traditional view of the sexes, even when such views are no longer realistic, the isolation of the characters within their own generation, the avoidance of many depressing problems intimately related to American sex attitudes, from poverty to discrimination to education, suggests that even the more capable American directors and writers are unwilling to probe too far into social attitudes. The tendency, instead, has been to become more blunt and explicit in treating the dilemmas of a series of limited stereotypes. Thus we have such absurdities as treating Jonathan in **Carnal Knowledge** as one of the chief male villains in the sexual wars. This old fashioned layabout is simply a straw man whom any woman of good sense would spot without trouble. The real villains are elsewhere — in corporate executives who exploit discrimination against women to save money, in media executives who degrade women for profit and in educators and community leaders who acquiesce to the limiting of female aspirations and the waste of female talent.

The fact that film critics are willing to take the traditional stereotypes and villains seriously simply indicates the dearth of perceptive and worthwhile social commentary in American films today. So long as American filmmakers avoid basic problems, however, it seems probable that they will fail to present new characters, new problems — or new solutions.

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# FRENZY

A Universal release (1972) of an Alfred Hitchcock production. Technicolor. 116 mins. Produced and Directed by Alfred Hitchcock. Screenplay: Anthony Shaffer, based on *Goodbye Piccadilly, Farewell Leicester Square* by Arthur LaBern. Associate Producer: William Hill. Photography: Gil Taylor. Production Design: Syd Cain. Editor: John Sympson. Cast: Jon Finch, Alec McCowan, Barry Foster, Billie Whitelaw, Bernard Cribbins, Anna Massey, Vivien Merchant, Barbara Leigh-Hunt, Michael Bates.

**Frenzy** is the Hitchcock film we've been waiting for since 1963. It's not as toweringly great as some he's done—it's a bit over-long, and a bit self conscious—but it's a thoroughly gripping, perfectly controlled exercise, and it's top notch entertainment. The master is back with his best film since **The Birds**.

All the elements that make a fine film are present in **Frenzy**. The script, by Anthony Shaffer, is elegant and graceful—characters express themselves with real charm and intelligence. When Inspector Oxford is introduced for the first time, he greets the audience, as well as the screen characters, with: "Good afternoon, one and all." His line to a police detective arriving with an important piece of evidence is, "Well, you're positively glowing with self-approbation." The man's essential humor and humanity are captured perfectly in such lines—making him one of the most fully-realized cops in any recent film. The other characters are given dialogue just as evocative.

The acting, too, is marvelous. Oxford, Richard Blaney (the main character), Blaney's girl, his ex-wife, several army buddies—all deliver rich, interesting performances. The script helps, of course, but the main credit must go to Hitchcock—his old expertise with actors, recently in eclipse, is clearly still there.

Structurally, **Frenzy** is completely satisfying. The elements of suspense that we expect from Hitchcock are there in full measure. Although the climax isn't as pyrotechnic as some he's done (you don't fall out of your chair, you just hang on tight), it works perfectly. The film is marvelously entertaining in the classic Hollywood/Hitchcock tradition; if Hollywood has forgotten how to make entertaining movies, Hitchcock hasn't.

Finally, though, the most exciting thing about **Frenzy** is simply that Hitchcock is back on top. After three disappointing films—**Marnie**, **Torn Curtain** and **Topaz**—Hitchcock has made, once again, a movie to rank with those that earned him his place in the pantheon of genius filmmakers.

Hitchcock is one of my favorite directors. From the restrained paranoia of the British films—like **39 Steps**, **Suspicion** and **The Lady Vanishes**—to the glorious flamboyance of the American films—like **Vertigo** and **North By Northwest**—he has consistently held my interest and engaged my imagination.

Hitchcock does make bad films occasionally, but because his films are so frequently masterpieces there has been a natural tendency to make excuses for him when he misses the mark. **Marnie** (1964), coming as it did after an astounding series of films that included **Rear Window** (1955), **The Man Who Knew Too Much** (1956), **Vertigo** (1958), **North By Northwest** (1959), **Psycho** (1960) and **The Birds** (1963), received mixed notices, but it was basically a minor film. The two films that followed—**Torn Curtain** (1966) and **Topaz** (1969)—were seriously flawed. **Topaz** didn't even have a climax! They were terribly confused films, and even hard-core Hitchcock fans began to lose hope. With **Frenzy**, we can breathe easy again—it needs no excuses.

Hitchcock's films are basically very simple—as all great art is simple. If you want to penetrate the man's mastery, all you have to do is pay attention to what's on the screen—it's all there. Of course, that isn't as easy as it sounds, because Hitchcock's genius is constantly working to involve you in the plot—and most of the time he succeeds. This is why Hitchcock's films must be seen more than once—it takes a few viewings before we can stand back from the action and watch the art.

Technically, Hitchcock is a master builder—his best films (i.e., most of them) are beautifully crafted, and have withstood the passing of time much as a well built house will ride out the years: the nails are well driven, the materials are carefully chosen, and the design is not only structurally sound, but aesthetically pleasing. Yet his greatness as a filmmaker lies deeper than craftmanship. His films confront us with ideas that reverberate in our minds long after the films themselves are over—ideas pertaining to the elusive nature of guilt and innocence, the difficulty in placing blame, and the potential for evil that lies within everyone.

To belabor the master builder analogy, Hitchcock's houses are not only well built, they are so brilliantly designed that living in them, even for a few hours, changes our perception of the universe. Certainly, this is not true of every film he ever made, but the pattern is so pervasive that it cannot be ignored. Hitchcock is a philosopher, and he uses the medium of film to express his ideas. He employs elements of suspense, mystery and *grand guignol* not only to hold our interest, but because they are perfectly appropriate to the major themes in which he deals.

Another element in Hitchcock's films that must be noted is his use of comedy. Almost all of his films, even the hard-core shockers, are funny—often hilariously so. On a level of personal bravura, the comedy indicates Hitchcock's utter control over his films, as if he were saying, "I can re-establish the suspense instantly, so it doesn't matter if I digress for a bit of gallows humor." Going somewhat deeper, the comedy functions, as it does in Shakespeare, as comic relief—to make the drama that much more effective.

But most importantly, Hitchcock uses comedy to implicate the audience in his complex pattern of shared guilt. One of his running themes is the idea that no one is ever *really* innocent— and by making us laugh at horrible things, he forces us to realize that we are, in many ways, just as guilty as the perpetrators of the evil deeds we laugh at.

We have, then, three criteria by which to judge Hitchcock's films: technique, comedy, and thematic complexity. Some of his films work in only one of these areas, or two, but the best of them work in all three.

**Frenzy** is one of his best.

In terms of technique, **Frenzy** is as good as anything he has ever done; it's a textbook example of how to shoot and edit a movie. As usual for Hitchcock, the basic tool is montage: the combination of simple shots into a complex whole. Since much of **Frenzy** consists of conversation, the montage is fairly simple — geometrical cross-cutting between medium shots of the actors creating a strong rhythm that we notice only when it's broken. Which is exactly why Hitchcock uses it.

The dinner table scene between Blaney and his ex-wife offers a perfect opportunity to see how this works. As the man and woman speak, Hitchcock alternates medium shots at a relaxed, even pace. Then, as Blaney grows agitated, the pace of the cutting accelerates slightly—just enough to be noticeable—and the camera moves in until the shots have become close-ups. Finally, when the cutting has become quite rapid, and the shots have become gigantic close-ups, Hitchcock cuts to a shot of Blaney's hand on a wine glass—which he breaks in his anger. The shock is tremendous—and it comes not from the breaking glass, but the montage that leads up to it. This is what filmmaking is all about.

In a similar way, the straightforward editing and photography make the occasional "far out" camera movement or shock cut all the more striking—and there are a couple of beauts in **Frenzy**: an intricate, terrifying track up a flight of stairs, around a corner, back down the stairs and out into the street (you'll have to see the film to understand exactly why this shot is terrifying), and a sudden, dreadfully horrific vertical shot down into a prison cell as Blaney is thrown in.

The comedy in **Frenzy** is marvelous—this is probably one of the funniest films Hitchcock has ever made. When Blaney and his girl hide out in the honeymoon suite of a posh hotel, and the owner's wife learns their identities, her shocked response is, "Not in the Cupid Room!" From the comic struggle between the killer and a corpse whose foot keeps kicking him in the face, to an hilarious subplot involving the Inspector's wife (more of this in a moment), the laughs are frequent and deeply satisfying. Hitchcock's touch is as sure as ever.

Thematically, the film seems thin—but only at first glance. We know we are dealing with a sexual psychopath—a perverted, sadistic killer—but Hitchcock insists on our recognizing that the killer shares important traits with the "normal" characters. In this way we are all implicated, at least potentially, in the murders.

In a typically outrageous touch, Hitchcock uses food to make his point. For the killer, there seems to be a curious equation between his victims and food: after the first rape/murder he calmly munches an apple. Later, he disposes of the body of another victim by placing it in a sack full of potatoes. At one point, Inspector Oxford even goes so far as to note: "We've got to find him before his appetite is whetted again."

Food is a running theme in **Frenzy**: all the characters have appetites, and are constantly satisfying them. There's the dinner scene with Blaney and his ex-wife, Inspector Oxford wolfing his breakfast at New Scotland Yard, people eating and drinking at cafés and bars. The point, then, is not that the killer's appetite, *per se*, is evil, but that it is a *perverted* appetite. Yet, can we say that the appetites of the "normal" characters are less perverted? As it happens, we cannot.

Inspector Oxford's wife, a delightfully engaging woman, is taking a course in gourmet cooking and, in a subplot played for laughs, continually serves the Inspector unappetizing dishes like fish-head soup. Despite the comedy, Hitchcock's point is clear: she is imposing her perverted appetite on her husband. One might even say that she is consciously raping his palate. When he asks her to guess what he'd like for dinner, she says, "Steak and a potato, but what you're going to get is . . ." and names some French monstrosity. It's no accident that she suspects the real killer—she understands him all too well.

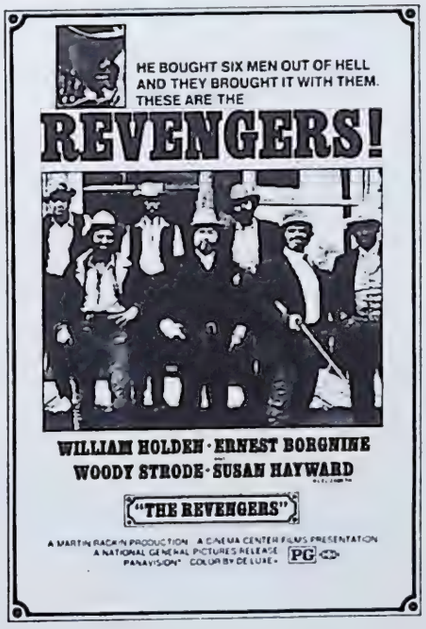
If the "good" characters are capable of rape, how are they significantly different from the "evil" characters? Even Blaney, the innocent man accused of murder, finally commits one—or attempts to, which is practically the same thing. And we, sitting in the audience, approve of his act. The dividing line between good and evil blurs, the circle closes: we are all creatures with appetites, some of them perverted. We all try to satisfy these appetites, and sometimes we go so far as to impose them on others.

**Frenzy** is as darkly ambiguous, as disturbingly suggestive as any film Hitchcock has ever made. The key elements are artfully disguised, but Hitchcock has always played games with his audience. For all its "entertainment values," for all its comedy, this is not a film to be taken lightly.

(Thanks to Naomi Wise for her help on the thematic analysis section.)

*Michael Goodwin*


GREAT SUMMERTIME VIEWING . . .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AND THEY BROUGHT IT WITH THEM.
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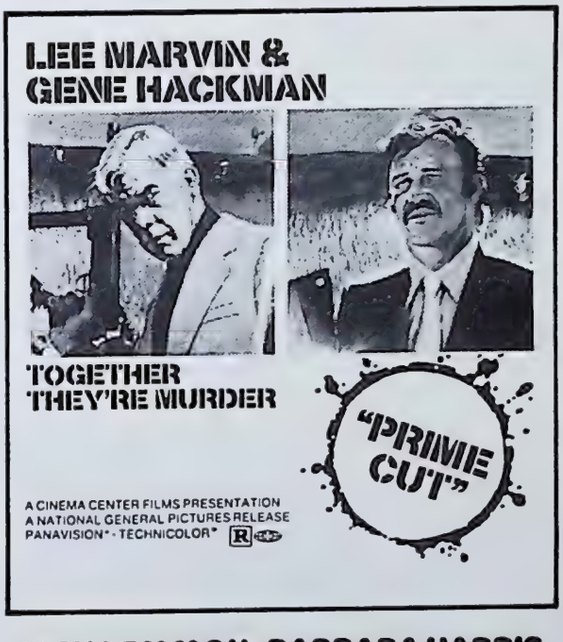

JACK LEMMON · BARBARA HARRIS

"THE WAR BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN"

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# SONS OF CAPTAIN POETRY

A Mongrel Film, produced with the assistance of The Ontario Arts Council and Quarry Films, Kingston. Distributed by the Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution Centre. Director: Michael Ondaatje. Photography: Robert Fresco. Editing: Ondaatje and Fresco.

bp nichol is a concrete (organic?) poet who feels the sounds of words and their shape on the page. He writes poems, draws poems, chants poems. He also thinks about poems. He is a very interesting and vital person.

Michael Ondaatje is also a poet. But he laid his hands on a movie camera and made **sons of captain poetry**, a 35 minute film about bp. It is also a poem, and like bp's work it is heavily visual and one has little choice about becoming involved in it. One wants to be: one is.

**sons** is a difficult film to talk about apart from bp nichol, and this is the best quality of the film. nichol talks about reaching people with poetry and then reads a poem to the camera with a trance-like, chanting style. The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse shout, murmur and grunt a reading while the camera eagerly peers at them from all angles, involved in their rhythms.

nichol's youth is captured with still photographs of his family, the camera panning wittily to juxtapose faces with the author's comments on the sound track. This traditional technique breaks with the introduction of the comic strip characters of bp's youth — Dick Tracy *et al*, in fabulous close-up from the original comic books. In short, the film provides the images of nichol's life, and it is never better than when it examines the beautiful alphabet graphics which form a part of his poetic work in which letters themselves *are* poetry.

Both nichol and the film have a particular and beautiful kind of honesty. In one shot he is carrying a large letter "A" down a street in an intent, professional manner — the poet at work with letters and sounds. It could be comic and naïve, Don Quixote with an "A"-lance, but the atmosphere of the film makes one recognize a craftsman at work, sincerely and carefully. Or rather craftsmen at work, for Ondaatje has set up the film frame in order for nichol to reach the audience.

**sons** contains a remarkable range of images. Like bp's poetry, Ondaatje's film approaches through all the sense techniques; music, graphics, stills, poetry read at one, poetry as sound track for camera action. The film's style makes it transparent, stating what nichol is like in nichol's terms (as in, say, **Help**). And finding out what bp nichol is like is very exciting indeed.

*P. Brigg*

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# DEALING . . .

Directed by Paul Williams; produced by Edward R. Pressman (Warner Brothers); screenplay by Paul Williams and David Odell from the novel by "Michael Douglas," photography, Ed Brown (Panavision, Technicolor); production design, Gene Callahan; editing, Sidney Katz; sound, Russ Heise; music, Michael Small; with Barbara Hershey (Susan), Robert F. Lyons (Peter), Charles Durning (Murphy), John Lithgow (John).

During the last, long seven years, American commercial cinema has tried many times to deal with the concerns of that strange group of people who came of age in the 1960s, each time failing totally and miserably. As Jean-Pierre Léaud said seven years ago in **Masculin-Féminin**: "It made us sad. This wasn't the film we'd dreamed of. This wasn't the total film that each of us had carried within himself . . . the film that we wanted to make, or, more secretly, no doubt . . . that we wanted to live." While schlock TV directors and aging hip actors have been disappointing and saddening Léaud and the rest of us, Paul Williams has quietly produced three films which are at once part of the commercial, professional cinema, and also honest, perceptive, and constructive about the politics and the life-styles of the late sixties and early seventies.

Now, in **Dealing: or the Berkeley-To-Boston Forty-Brick Lost-Bag Blues**, Williams has completed what might very well be seen as his trilogy about life in the 1960s. **Out of It** studied the roots; **The Revolutionary** focused on the central political question; **Dealing** investigates the life-style. Robert F. Lyons is a pasty-faced, vaguely paranoid northeastern semi-student who takes a journey to Berkeley, the land of California dreamin' where he meets Susan.

Peter: Are we gonna get together? I've got terrific technique!

Susan: I'm really not *that* into balling — usually.

The lines ring with truth and constructive humor. Williams is the only U.S. director of commercial films who neither condescends to, nor fawns upon, his young characters.

Back in Boston, Peter arranges for Susan to finance a trip east by bringing in forty bricks of grass. She is busted at the Boston airport, and the remainder of the film deals with the


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plot Peter devises for freeing her. To do so, he must become a mirror image, albeit slightly hipper, of the most despicable characters of the society the edge of which is his spiritual home. The film ends with a shootout at Walden Pond: Peter and Susan vs. Cuban pushers vs. crooked cops. In this one, perfectly cut sequence, Williams has triangulated the sociology that makes Peter, Susan and so many of us suffocate even outside the culture we reject. Like his brother Paul in **Masculin-Féminin**, Peter discovers that there is no escape: the battle must be joined: the Greening of America is so much shit: so long as one of us is not free, none of us is free: Amerika cannot be defused by being ignored.

Within this theoretical framework the film is redolent with fascinating details — all of which contribute to a serious and concerned, yet sympathetic, critique of the counter-culture. Williams never suffocates his people with blind acceptance; on the contrary, he shows his love for his characters by continually evaluating the consequences of their actions and opinions. He cares enough about them to risk their displeasure — this alone makes his films far superior to other commercial products on the same subjects. But there is more here than just honesty and wit; Williams, like Godard, *et al*, 12 years ago, appears as a naturally talented filmmaker, and he works with a high consciousness of the genre film. Unlike Bogdanovich and Friedkin, however, Williams makes films of some moral and political substance. There is little enough of that, of course, in the U.S. commercial cinema.

As it happens, **Dealing** bears significant resemblances to **Masculin-Féminin**, and contrasts with it in interesting ways. Both Godard and Williams are fascinated by the passivity of their characters. For Godard, the passivity is a result of intellectuality: for Williams, the passivity is the direct corollary of Peter's powerlessness. Godard's Paul is passive to the end — even his suicide is ambiguous. Williams' Peter is able to act only when he decides to play the game, to participate in the ugly culture he has hitherto ignored. Both Peter and Paul are obsessed with a crude romantic vision of woman, and ultimately trapped by that obsession; both directors share an essentially masculine attitude towards their characters and, as a result, the women of the film are highly distantiated. In **Dealing**, the women are hardly more than sex objects, and this is an important part of Williams' critique. In **Masculin-Féminin**, politics lurks around the edges of the film and offers a tantalizing hope to Paul, even if it is evaded in the end. In **Dealing**, politics is seen only through a stoned haze as just another cultural facet — like *Zap Comix* and Harvard psychology classes — and this comprises the second important element of Williams' critique of the counter-culture. Godard told us of the "children of Marx and Coca-cola." In Williams' film Marx is ignored, and "Coke" is cocaine. There's the rub!

*James Monaco*

# CANNES FILM FESTIVAL

Cannes failed this year in its avowed aim of promoting good cinema. The festival is pledged also to assist "the development of the world film industry," but of the 25 films in competition, all but two came from North America and Europe, and you heard gossip about prize-rigging. The overall quality of the three official French entries was such that the French Film Critics Association protested and demanded that selection procedures be revised. The fact is tnat although Cannes is an international festival and, ostensibly, accepts entries on merit alone, the French industry always manages to grab a piece of it. This year, like last, the French made fools of themselves by over-reaching.

Films I saw in the official section included:

**The Visitors**. United States. Director: Elia Kazan. "If they show Kazan's film," jury chairman Joseph Losey reportedly declared, several weeks before the festival, "I won't go and see it." Losey, of course, was victimized by the Hollywood McCarthyites, whereas Kazan cooperated. In any event, the film didn't get a prize. I don't think it should have, but it's a cool and efficient piece of work, much better than what we usually get from Kazan, essentially a middlebrow director with highbrow pretentions.

**Chinmoku (Silence)**. Japan. Director: Masahiro Shinoda. A real oddity, this, about a European Jesuit on the run in old Japan. He winds up losing both face and faith. The film seems to be saying that torture can break the strongest spirit, as well as echoing Kipling's views on East-West relations. Asked at the press conference afterward what his film meant, Shinoda replied testily that he couldn't be expected to explain a Japanese film to Westerners. Yes, but as someone later remarked, how is he going to explain it to the Japanese?

**Nous Ne Vieillirons Pas Ensemble**. France. Director: Maurice Pialat. The breakup of an affair between a nice ordinary woman (Marlène Jobert) and a highly temperamental filmmaker (Jean Yanne). The analysis of human emotions is done with customary French expertise, and the film tells you more about the French character than you may want to know. The announcement that Yanne had won the Best Actor prize unleashed a storm of booing at the prizegiving, perhaps because of some *enfant terrible* remarks Yanne had made in print about the film, and his attitude toward his role in it. Nevertheless, apart from Toshiro Mifune and Gian Maria Volonté, there is no actor I would rather watch.

**La Vraie Nature De Bernadette**. Canada. Director: Gilles Carle. If **Viridiana** had been reworked by one of the more heavy-handed Czechoslovak directors, it might have come out like this. The warmth of Micheline Lanctot's earth-mother performance cannot dispel the coldness at the film's center.

**Il Caso Mattei (The Mattei Affair)**. Italy. Director: Francesco Rosi. An investigative biography of Enrico Mattei, the maverick Italian oilman whose death in a plane crash in 1962 is rumored to have been the result of sabotage by either U.S. oil interests, the Mafia, or the French secret service. The film depicts Mattei as progressive, in the Marxist, if not the ecological, sense, inasmuch as he promoted industrialisation in backward regions. Rosi said at his press conference he didn't know whether or not Mattei's plane was sabotaged, although I had assumed from what I saw on the screen that it was. The film is an absorbing one, but a trifle dry. I don't think its instructiveness would have been impaired by a little less of Mattei (Gian Maria Volonté) the public man, and a little more of the private. Shared the Grand Prix with Elio Petri's film.

*Red Psalm*

**Red Psalm**. Hungary. Director: Miklos Jancso. The symbolism and ravishing beauty of this account of a peasant uprising in the 1890s will no doubt upset the agitprop school of critics, but for me Jancso has solved the problem of how to make a militant film that is also aesthetically satisfying. Now all he has to do is win a mass audience. Awarded the Director's Prize.

**Petrolejove Lampy (Oil Lamps)**. Czechoslovakia. Director: Juraj Herz. Maupassant-like tale, set at the turn of the century, of a thirtyish virgin who marries a fortune-hunting army officer and finds out he has syphilis. He goes mad, she is left facing a childless middle age. It's sentimental, and some people hated it, but I found it one of the few worthwhile films of the festival. Visually, it imitates the Impressionists, and Iva Janzurova, who plays the luckless heroine, is in every sense a lovely actress. Suitably poignant soundtrack music by Ivo Fischer.

**La Classa Operaia Va In Paradiso (The Working Class Goes To Heaven)**. Italy. Director: Elio Petri. Sourly humorous account of a hyper-industrious factory worker (Gian Maria Volonté) who acquires revolutionary consciousness after losing a finger to a machine. Petri is inclined to patronise his audience in the Marxist-intellectual manner, as if it were news that factory work plays havoc with a man's mental and sexual life, but Volonté is in great form, and there is a wonderful bit by Salvo Randone as an elderly militant committed to an asylum even though — or because — he is saner than most people outside.

**A Fan's Notes**. Canada. Director: Eric Till. How did this one creep in? Watching it is like enduring a hangover. Jerry Orbach, the fan, is Oscar Levant as Hamlet.

In the out-of-competition section, **Fellini-Roma** got a big hand, but not from me. I'll grant that Fellini has a marvelous eye, but there's not much behind it, except a certain wistfulness, and after a while just plain virtuosity becomes a bore. Similarly, I cannot see why otherwise intelligent critics, who wouldn't be caught dead at a well-made play, have such admiration for the clockwork melodramas of Alfred Hitchcock. **Frenzy**, which closed the festival, has its merits, notably the acting of Alec McCowen, but the film's screw-'em-and-

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strangle-'em Grand Guignol is pretty horrible, and there is something totalitarian in the way Hitchcock manipulates one's nervous system. I also reacted negatively to John Huston's **Fat City**, which everyone else loved. It's really a very slight work, made up mostly of prizefights and drunken conversations. In style and content it's basically a telefilm. The exact opposite is true of Tom Gries' prison drama **The Glass House**, which genuinely *was* made for television, although you'd hardly guess. Gries' film is traditional cinema at its finest, the tradition in this case being the old Warner one of muckraking plus gunplay.

I didn't see many of the films in the Directors Fortnight, but I gather I didn't miss much. As in the official section, East European directors were the most impressive. Here's what I did see:

**Wezwanie (The Challenge)**. Poland. Director: Wojciech Solarz. Village woman makes a nice safe marriage with an up-and-coming farmer and lives to regret it. Her husband is a brute, the elder of her two sons is a go-getter like his father, and the younger son is a slightly batty artist type. Eventually the husband dies of cancer, the younger son drowns himself, and the elder son sells the family home and moves to the city. His mother, however, gets a second chance with an old suitor, the man she should have married in the first place. Put that way it sounds like soap opera, but director Solarz, a new name to me, knows how to distil tragedy from corn. I hope the fact that the film is in black-and-white will not damage its chances on the international market.

**La Tecnica E Il Rito (Technique And Rite)**. Italy. Director: Miklos Jancso. Jancso made this one for Italian television, immediately before **Red Psalm**. It focusses on a few hours in the life of Attila the Hun, just at the start of his career. (For "Attila," played by Jozsef Madaras, the murderous priest of **Agnus Dei**, read "Stalin.") As you'd expect from the title, this is a rather abstract work, an almost pure exercise in style, and I must admit I get more pleasure in thinking about it that I did in actually watching it. But how often is a film worth even thinking about?

**Savages**. United States. Director: James Ivory. This one should have been called "Son Of Exterminating Angel," making, as it does, the arguable point that a Neanderthal lurks behind every bourgeois dinner jacket and Balenciaga gown. Its campy satire on upper-class mores, combined with a Jazz Age setting and dialogue like T. S. Eliot in his so-called comic vein, should delight the cultists. We have here a brand-new genre: the millionaire's home movie.

Critics Week started off well enough with **Fritz The Cat**, then deteriorated. For instance, there was the West German **Der Hamburger Aufstand Oktober 1923**, a reconstruction of one of the Weimar Republic's abortive leftist revolts, and, despite its worthy subject, a real poleaxer. (Falling asleep at the movies in Cannes is only too easy.) I also wish I had skipped Canada's **La Maudite Galette**, directed by Denys Arcand, and not passed over the French **Avoir Vingt Ans Dans Les Aurès**, by all accounts a first-rate anti-war film. Its director, René Vautier, is a veteran French militant who worked with the Algerian resistance. The film won the International Critics Prize.

Another film I didn't see in this section was the Brazilian **Prata Palomares**, directed by André Faria, but neither did anyone else — the Brazilian government having refused it an export visa. It is described as an allegorical study of torture in an unidentified country.

Critics Week wound up with **The Trial Of The Catonsville Nine**, demonstrating yet again that "courtroom drama" is a contradiction in terms. Badly acted, badly directed, and doubly *bien pensant*, this is a truly dreadful film, damaging to its own cause. Bad leftist art is reactionary.

The film was followed by a press conference featuring Gregory Peck, who produced the film, drummer Shelly Manne, who wrote the music, and Father Daniel Berrigan. Father Berrigan expressed incontestable views ("Prison is a punishment for the poor") in a disquietingly flat and mechanical voice. Perhaps the hustlers' atmosphere of Cannes got him down: a woman who heard him at a meeting in Paris a few days later tells me he spoke with warmth and humor. On the subject of Vietnam, however, I was more moved by what Groucho Marx said at *his* press conference: "They should bring all the children home."

Groucho was in Cannes to be invested Commander of the Order of Arts and Letters, a French government award. The bewilderment of being 81 has slowed his verbal delivery to half-speed, but age hasn't mellowed him. His reply, when asked what he thought of Jerry Lewis, whom he has praised in print, must have made French critics weep in their Pernods: "He's a cheap comic. He makes faces."

Clearly no Francophile, Groucho asked at one point in the press conference: "Aren't there any Americans here?" When reminded that black critic Albert Johnson, who had just asked a question, was American, Groucho commented: "He's not American. He's a *schwarzer*."

The investiture, held in the Festival Palace, was interrupted by *Positif* critic Michel Ciment's anguished shout that the whole business contradicted everything the Marx Brothers stood for. When the citation had been read, Groucho fingered his medal.

"This can't be hocked?" he asked.

*Geoffrey Minish*

*The Birch Wood*

**Brzezina (The Birch Wood)**. Poland. Director: Andrzej Wajda. Another family drama, made for Polish television. It's about a young forester, a bitter man mourning his wife's death, and how his tubercular, dying brother is instrumental in restoring his will to live and regaining him the love of his daughter. But of course, the film is "about" more than its story, and there are images here, often very simple images, that go straight to the solar plexus. "Film," as Miklos Jancso says, "is an extremely primitive genre, more primitive than literature, not to mention music." Anyway, this particular film is further proof that Wajda is the finest artist working in the Western cinema.

# TOKYO STORY

A New Yorker Films release (1972) of a Takeshi Yamamoto production (1953) for Shochiku. 135 mins. Director: Yasujiro Ozu. Script: Kogo Noda and Ozu. Photography: Yushun Atsuta. Editing: Yoshiyasu Hamamura. Music: Takanori Saito. Cast: Chishu Ryu, Chiyeko Higashiyama, Setsuko Hara, So Yamamura, Haruko Sugimura, Kuniko Miyake, Kyoko Kagawa. Japanese title: Tokyo Monogatari.

Having seen few Japanese films, and no other Ozu film, I cannot link Ozu to any tradition — but the closest parallel I can think of is the Indian director Satyajit Ray, who started his career in film four years after **Tokyo Story** (1953). Like the father-in-law in Ray's **Mahanagar**, Ozu's old couple are simple people caught in a changing world, and left lonely and desolate by its inexorable momentum. **Tokyo Story** nevertheless remains cheerfully, but not facilely, on the side of life. It is neither a fierce affirmation of life nor a bleak denial; it is a patient, sadly smiling acceptance of it, and in this the film is truly oriental. The changing life in Ozu's film is never cruel or ruthless. It makes itself felt almost obliquely in subtly changed attitudes. The son Koichi, a suburban doctor, and the daughter Shige, a beautician, regard their aged parents' visit as a mild inconvenience. Noriko, the widowed daughter-in-law, works in a company and lives alone in a workers' flat. The old couple urge Noriko to marry again. "Times have changed. Widows can marry again." The changed sociological fact is mentioned without disapproval. It is merely acknowledged.

Signs of changing life are already present in the opening shots of Onomachi, a small sea-

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port near Hiroshima. Steamers pass back and forth in the bay. A black train streams past along the curving railway tracks. For Kyoko, the train is a symbol of life elsewhere, that which brings people from and takes them to Tokyo, a promise of the future; for Keizo it is a place of employment; for the old couple it is a wonder of the new age that has not been integrated into their everyday life. ("We were in Onomachi yesterday and now we are in Tokyo," muses the old mother.)

And when they visit their children in Tokyo, Koichi and Shige turn out to be less than solicitous. The little ones are not particularly anxious to make friends with their grandparents. The rebellious Minoru is annoyed that his desk had to be moved to make room for grandpa and grandma. The unconscious cruelty that children are capable of, almost always avoided on the screen, is treated with rare insight in two brief scenes. Later, when they are packed off to Atami hot springs, the old couple cannot feel at home there either, for they are surrounded by gay young people who sing and make merry late into the night.

The only kindness they receive in Tokyo is from Noriko. Having known tragedy and loneliness in her own life, she is considerate to a degree that makes Koichi and Shige appear almost cruel. But as Noriko herself explains to Kyoko after her mother's death: "Children drift away from their parents. At Shige's age a woman has her own private life." But even as they agree that life is disappointing Noriko and Kyoko seem to submit only tentatively to the eternal flow that the old couple so readily accept in their old age. In a later scene, Noriko confesses to her aged father-in-law the deep, private fears that lurk beneath her apparent serenity.

And even as seasons change and days break, so death occurs, a natural and organic event in a perpetual cycle. A few hours after the death of his wife, Hireyama, watching the sun rising over the bay, mutters "It was a beautiful dawn. Looks like it is going to be another hot day." Later in the film, when Noriko has gone back to Tokyo, he sits on his veranda looking out toward the harbor and the rooftops. A neighbor stops by: "You will be lonely now." "Yeah. If I had known this I would have been kinder to her." His extreme humility is almost an awe of life itself.

If there is a pervading mood in the film, it is one of infinite patience. It is not to be understood that Ozu treats his people as passive beings manipulated by a destiny that is too much for them. Often the camera lingers deferentially on faces, and places just vacated by the people, long after the high point of the scene — a gentle reminder that the people remain and feel and suffer quietly even after the camera has moved away.

*N. Sreekumara Menon*

# CULPEPPER CATTLE CO.

A Twentieth-Century Fox release (1972) of a Richards & Helmick Production. Deluxe Color. 92 mins. Producer: Paul A. Helmick. Director: Dick Richards. Screenplay: Eric Bercovici and Gregory Prentiss, from a story by Dick Richards. Photography: Lawrence Edward Williams and Ralph Woolsey. Music: Tom Scott and Jerry Goldsmith. Cast: Gary Grimes, Billy "Green" Bush, Luke Askew, Bo Hopkins, Geoffrey Lewis, Wayne Sutherlin, John McLiam.

**The Culpepper Cattle Co.** is a classic western, but it's also a great deal more: a Morality Play, a filmic *bildungsroman*, and a strikingly believable portrayal of the American frontier in terms more realistic than anything since Monte Hellman's masterpiece, **Ride In the Whirlwind**. It's a fascinating film on any number of levels.

Westerns seem to make excellent vehicles for ideology. Somehow, their stock situations and characters are ready-made for carrying a heavy weight of symbolism — without bogging down in Significance. One can cite scores of westerns that transcend the simplistic head-em-off-at-the-pass, good guys/bad guys image that plagues the genre: **Red River** comes to mind immediately, as do countless films by John Ford and some of the early Peckinpah westerns. What it comes down to is this: the western can function on a number of levels simultaneously, and allows the filmmaker freedom to deal with serious matters without impeding dramatic flow or excitement.

**Culpepper**, directed by Dick Richards, falls squarely into this tradition of metaphysical westerns. On the surface it's a fast-moving, engrossing adventure story, beautifully photographed and well acted (by a cast largely taken from the New York Actors' Studio). But in addition, it poses important questions pertaining to man's place in a harsh universe, and the morality of his use of violence (and non-violence) in dealing with it. The film offers little hope, but its ideological underpinnings are so solid that we have to accept the film as a considered, if pessimistic, philosophical statement. We may not like the message, but we can't dismiss it.

The film deals with a young man, Ben Mockridge (played well, if a trifle too sweetly, by Gary Grimes), who signs on with Frank Culpepper for a cattle drive. The drive takes Ben through a landscape of harsh country and brutal men; he learns to shoot first and fast if he wishes to survive. Seldom before have I seen a western so devoid of kindness, of simple humanity. Even the cowboys who work alongside Ben are cruel, pragmatic killers. His "friends" differ from his "enemies" only in that they are being paid to protect the herd. There is no law in **Culpepper** save the law of force, and no morality at all. It's not pretty, but it's probably much closer to historical reality than the versions of the west we've seen before.

The film makes it perfectly clear that the only way to oppose force is with more force. There are no fistfights in **Culpepper**, only gunfights — and once the guns start blazing they don't stop until nearly everyone in sight is dead. By the end, the film has begun to resemble a Greek tragedy — the forces in play are so irresistable that the men seem helpless before them. If some guy has more guns than you do, he'll take your money and your cattle — simply because he can. The only way to stop him is to kill him — if you can.

Yet Ben is clearly disturbed by the lessons he is forced to learn, and when the drive runs into a group of religious pacifists who are being threatened by local bad guys (i.e., men with guns) he decides to stay and fight for them. But the pacifists prove to be hypocrites, as well as fools, and when the final, apocalyptic battle is over Ben knows he cannot pretend to non-violence; his world will not allow such a luxury. Still, sickened by the killing, he drops his gun and walks away — torn between the brutality of violence and the ineffectiveness of non-violence. There is no solution to his dilemma.

It's tempting to view **The Culpepper Cattle Co.** as an historical slice-of-life — depressing but, happily, gone forever. But can we dismiss

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it so easily? I think not. The nature of violence has not changed, nor has the rule of force — what else is Vietnam all about, if not a nation with guns brutalizing a nation without them? Director Richards confronts us with a difficult, perhaps ultimately unsolvable problem — and by building his Morality with real people in a concrete situation, he makes it all but impossible for us to avoid dealing with the underlying issue. *Michael Goodwin*

# ANOTHER SMITH FOR PARADISE

Astral Communications release of a James Margellos production. Written and directed by Tom Shandel; photography, Miklos M. Lente; editing, Homer Powell; music, Don Druick. With: Henry Ramer, Frances Hyland, Otto Lowry, Pia Shandel, Roger Dressler, Sam Payne. Eastmancolour, 102 minutes.

Believe it or not, this is the plot.

Smitty (Henry Ramer) is a sly, ruthless, porky, balding, middle-aged businessman of Ukrainian descent. His wife Marie (Frances Hyland) is a tired, bored, restless, shiftless, faithless, booze-prone broad. Their daughter Lily (Pia Shandel) is a nagging example of Women's Lip. She's fresh out of Berkeley where it seems she majored in four-letter words. Smitty hires private detectives to spy on his wife. The Internal Revenue Department is spying on him.

*Neon Message Number One:* the rich aren't happy.

Lily retires to her bedroom which is equipped with about $50,000 worth of electrical equipment. Her hobby is making bombs. Mother in the meantime is having a "mad thing" with an artist. Lenny (Roger Dressler) is the whatever-does-she-see-in-him lover. We all know it's difficult being an artist. It's especially difficult for Lenny. He's in a permanent state of satyriasis. When he isn't saying things like "Outasight, man," or "far out," he's making animal noises, and jumping about in his red jump-suit and Afro hair-style, giving Marie the squeeze. She dotes on him. Divided between her poor but sexually juicy artist and her rich and sexually dehydrated husband, Marie just drinks a lot and thinks as little as possible.

*Neon Message Number Two:* If you make it on Bay Street you can't make it in bed.

Smitty wants to become president of a local Ukrainian club, a motley group of two dozen old immigrants. He promises to build a two million dollar residence named after a 17th century Ukrainian warlord at the local university. He does this, mind you, in order to gain the votes of the members in this ratty old club. It's an implausible gesture. Smitty, remember, is supposed to be sly and ruthless.

He phones the university chancellor to make his proposal. The chancellor's wife is watching television in a dowdy dressing-gown, and her hair is in curlers. The chancellor is in his underwear, drinking beer. Again the movie veers into implausibility: this isn't life sensitively or accurately observed. "Sure, you can build a residence at our university," says the chancellor drunkenly, "Sure, you can name it Leshinski Hall, and put a statue outside commemorating Leshinski whoever-he-was."

Not content to be implausible the plot now gets silly.

Smitty wants his wife's lover to design and build the statue. He visits him late at night. The artist is lounging nude in his studio (the poorest excuse for a "Restricted" rating in many years). "No way," he says to Smitty's offer. So Smitty buys the artist's studio and doubles his rent.

*Neon Message Number Three:* Money talks.

The artist gives in. He works in secret for weeks. Smitty thinks he is buying a masterpiece. The artist finally delivers the work, under wraps, and when it is unveiled, it's a pink plaster "fickle finger of fate," standing about 20 feet high. Lily, meanwhile, has decided to strike a blow against capitalism. She might better have begun by giving up her lavish wardrobe or all that electrical equipment, but never mind, this movie has no mind. She has secretly wired the statue for detonation. When it turns out that the public *likes* the statue, applauds and cries out "Bravo!" Lenny runs around screaming "Don't you see, you idiots, it's a put-on," and Lily remarks, "Oh Lenny it's beautiful. The public will accept anything."

Anything but **Another Smith For Paradise**. This $200,000 Canadian film opened in Vancouver and died within a week. The rest of Canada is bracing itself for subsequent runs.

Why was it made? The story is pointless. The actors are mostly unknown and they deserve to stay that way. Those that aren't miscast, act badly. Frances Hyland's participation in the film can only be explained by supposing that she fell under the spell of a passing death wish. Her opening line is "Ok, Kane of the Ukraine, can we get out of here?" A thankless line, but what's worse, there's no reason to believe that Marie has ever seen **Citizen Kane**. Anyone who has would certainly want to get out of **Another Smith For Paradise**. The movie has no insight into its characters. It has no sense of what is appropriate for them to do and say. It just bungles along with its leaden clichés and its smattering of radical chic. It's a sophomorically cynical, cheapjack piece of junk and it makes me ashamed that it is Canadian. **Another Smith For Paradise** is another film for perdition. *John Hofsess*

# AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

Director: Ian McNaughton; Producer: Patricia Casey; Director of Photography: David Muir; Editor: Thom Noble; Art Director: Colin Grimes; Conceived, Written, and Performed by John Cleese, Graham Chapman, Terry Gilliam, Eric Idle, Terry Jones, and Michael Palin with Carol Cleveland and Connie Booth. A Kettledrum-Python Productions production, distributed by Columbia. 88 minutes.

It is difficult, one must admit, to write anything clever after viewing a film which includes such episodes as "Hell's Grannies," "Joke Warfare," the brand-new television game show, "Herbert Anchovy Presents BLACKMAIL," and, inevitably, "The Upper Class Twit of the Year Race." These and other sketches are the substance of one of the most hilarious and original movies to come along in a while.

About two years ago, five Englishmen (John Cleese, Eric Idle, Graham Chapman, Terry Jones, and Michael Palin) and one American (Terry Gilliam) happened by chance to come together. Out of this gathering was born a very nearly impossible B.B.C. television series entitled "Monty Python's Flying Circus." Sometime during the first series, a New York Metropolitan Opera dancer-turned-choreographer-turned-associate producer named Patricia Casey saw this phenomenon which had swept over Britain. She had been looking for a subject to produce as a feature film, and when she saw "Python,"

she was sure that she had found it. Subsequently, Monty Python's **And Now For Something Completely Different** was prepared and shot in the six week hiatus between series.

As far as the cinema world is concerned, **And Now For Something Completely Different** is. One cannot enter the theatre expecting any kind of narrative. In fact, one cannot expect any kind of sanity or human reason at all. For example, a gentleman returns a parrot to the pet shop where it was purchased not an hour before. His complaint: the parrot is dead. The proprietor insists, "It's just resting." The dissatisfied customer demonstrates that the parrot is indeed dead. "It is an ex-parrot!" he concludes. The pet shop owner offers to exchange the parrot for a slug, but that is hardly a suitable substitute. After all, slugs don't talk, do they? The pet seller replies in the proper manner: He never wanted to own a pet shop anyway — his real dream was to be a lumberjack, singing with his girl in the tall timber backwoods of British Columbia. And so, he is transported there, complete with axe and R.C.M.P. chorus. And together they sing:

I cut down trees
I skip and jump
I like to press wild flowers
And put on women's clothing
And hang around in bars

This is Ian McNaughton's maiden voyage as a feature film director, but he has weathered the change well for he was the director of the television series. He uses television techniques in the film to maintain the integrity of the material to the original medium.

The only fault is a circumstantial one. The television series has been seen in Australia, New Zealand and West Germany, as well as Britain and Canada. In these markets, the film may prove to be somewhat of a disappointment, because the audiences will have seen the material beforehand. However, even for those who have seen the sketches before, the material is still fresh and as funny as ever.

Comparison with Richard Lester's **Running, Jumping, Standing Still Film** featuring the Goons is inevitable, but though that film, and the Goon Show itself, have been influences on Monty Python, **And Now For Something Completely Different** still is.

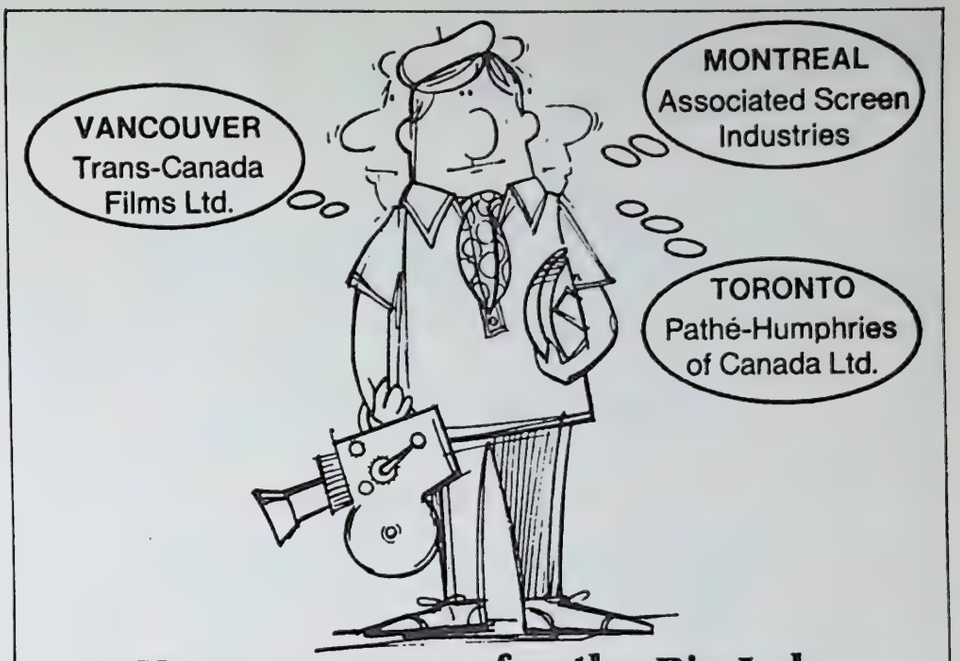
*Blaine Allan*

**Associate Editor Joe Medjuck Gets In His Two Cents:**
If you liked Auschwitz you'll love **And Now For Something Completely Different**. Virtually every joke is based on killing, maiming, destruction or sexism. This film exploits women, homosexuals and anyone who pays to see it. It ends with a skit about the "upper class twit of the year." My nomination goes to Monty Python's Flying Circus.

# THE PIED PIPER

Directed by Jacques Demy; produced by David Puttnam and Sanford Lieberson; screenplay, Andrew Birkin, Mark Peploe and Jacques Demy; music by Donovan; camera, Peter Suschitzky; production design, Assheton Gorton; art director, George Djurkovic; costumes, Vangy Harrison; rat trainer, John Holmes; editor, John Trumper. With: Jack Wild, Donald Pleasance, John Hurt, Donovan, Diana Dors, Keith Buckley. Paramount release of Saggittarius production.

There are periods in history that seem to have no place for the sensitive man. **The Pied Piper** is set in Germany in the Dark Ages; Demy obviously feels the same darkness in the world of the '70s. These are times when the artist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**Charlton Heston remembers Orson Welles'** Touch of Evil;
**Jean-Pierre Gorin talks about** Tout Va Bien;
**Leigh Brackett (who wrote, or co-wrote, the scripts of** The Big Sleep, Rio Bravo, Hatari!, Eldorado, and Rio Lobo) **writes about Howard Hawks;**
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stops struggling with an ungrateful world, retreats, and hides his light, perhaps saving his energy to be reborn in some vague future time.

The times in which Demy's characters could dance and sing in bright sunlit streets have passed. Lola has given up hoping. **The Pied Piper** is a film of wistful melancholy. The characters may still yearn, but there is no promise of better times. In **Les Demoiselles de Rochefort**, Demy's most optimistic film, there was an inevitability that man's highest dreams would be fulfilled. The obstacles of life were synonymous with the joyous mechanisms of fate. One had only to wait—and why not be happy while waiting?

It is sad to see a director who once was able to make us see the innate nobility of man with a fresh eye, now fall into the depression of **The Pied Piper**. These have not been happy times for Jacques Demy. He has become a wanderer. He has lost his own sense of function and has fallen back on his innate sense of good taste to direct a graceful, but unmotivated film.

Evidently uninvolved with the content of his film, Demy concentrates on the craft of directing. His decor is admirable; his staging of scenes is remarkably complex and controlled. Demy has always liked combining disparate incidents into a single locale, with different characters entering and exiting a single scene, shifting our attention back and forth, simultaneously developing the diverse threads of his narrative. Before, such staging served to emphasize the function of coincidence in the mechanism of fate. Here, the complex staging becomes a master exercise in economy —as if by combining several incidents into a single scene (or a single shot), Demy saves himself the trouble of setting up his camera more than once. The camera moves less out of a joy in movement than functionally, to follow the complex staging. This technique serves to deemphasize the spectacle inherent in the project. Everything flows by, equally unpunctuated by close-ups or intercutting. The story is told simply and without pretension.

Demy avoids problems simply by staying away from them. He plays it safe by confronting none of the potential weaknesses (or challenges) of the project that has been given him. Donovan, whom one might expect to be obnoxious, is affably peripheral. The camera tends to pan slowly away from him as he sings. The magic of his flute-playing is treated as an unexplained given. Yet the potential transcendence (and meaning) of the legend lies in the magic of the Pied Piper. It is Demy's failure that he avoids this question.

Demy plays against the inherent optimism of his ending by cutting between a despairingly untranscendent burning at the stake of the one figure of wisdom in the story (an alchemist) and the final seduction of the children of the village of Hamelin. Instead of irony or revelation, the upper and downer of these two actions simply cancel each other out, leaving us at a loss to feel anything but cheated. Demy feels cheated also. The film ends with a perfunctory historical title about how many people died in the plague.

To Demy's credit, the most beautiful shot in the film is our final view of the Pied Piper leading the children (all dressed in white) through a green meadow, away from the camera, finally dissolving magically from our sight just as the sun begins to rise over the hill. Yet, even this shot is more nostalgic than visionary. It reverberates with back-to-nature simplicity, and an innocence wish.

For Demy is dealing with the plight of innocence in a totally corrupt world. There is no particular hope even for the children in this film — except to be led away to some uncertain oblivion. Even the tranquility of the meadow shot is overshadowed by the intercut chaos of the town as the plague begins to strike.

Two central characters are a little girl, the daughter of the town's burgomaster, and a crippled boy, the apprentice of the alchemist and an aspiring artist. The girl is cruelly married off to the warring son of the local royalty, and finally led away with the other children. The boy is denied this escape. He finally leaves the town with a sympathetic troupe of travelling actors to become himself a wanderer. (Thus the artist is left in abeyance.)

Earlier, the boy had sought out the Pied Piper looking for hope that he might be cured of his limp. Donovan sings a weak song asking "Why not be happy?" but he can promise none of the happy ending miracles that are usually so easy to come by in fairy tales (and Demy's earlier films). For Demy has treated the legend of the Pied Piper as cruel, unmiraculous reality. Instead of implying that hope can grow out of adverse conditions, Demy has given in to the adverse conditions. He draws no conclusion from the legend except that life is hard. In one scene, Donovan commiserates with a lone rat that has escaped drowning, and suggests that even rats must treat each other better than men treat other men.

This film does derive a certain grace in its detached observation of man's struggle, but Demy is no longer able to give us that gift of joy that his earlier films extended. Taste and discretion cannot replace conviction; and beauty of form is small compensation for loss of vision. We hope Demy is feeling better soon, and that he gets a chance to apply his stored up energy to a happier project.

*John H. Dorr*

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*John Dorr is a writer/filmmaker presently biding his time in Los Angeles looking for financing for two film projects.*

In the last few years, the feature film industry in Quebec has made great strides. Seventeen feature films were released during the 1971-72 season, and the québécois public gave them a warm reception. Feature films are therefore tempting more and more filmmakers — even those whom one thought were devoted to documentaries and direct cinema. Because of the success of feature films in general, money is more easily available for their production. Too, there was the feeling among many cinéastes that documentaries, after many years, had become a sort of dead-end: the documentary filmmakers are now anxious to find a larger public, and to have their work seen. Among the newcomers to the fiction film this year two names stand out: Jean-Claude Labrecque, who made **Les smattes**, and Denys Arcand with **La maudite galette**. As if to underscore the quality of these films, the Cannes Festival chose them both for screening, the first in the Director's Fortnight, and the second in the Critic's Week.

**Les smattes** was greatly anticipated here in Quebec because of Labrecque's established reputation in filming. As director of photography, he had already worked with the important Quebec filmmakers. He was cameraman on shorts made by Gilles Groulx, Arthur Lamothe and Jean Dansereau. His features cover more than ten years, from Jutra's **A tout prendre** (1961) to Carle's **La vie heureuse de Léopold Z** (1965) and Lefebvre's **Les maudits sauvages** (1970). Most recently he has completed Jacques Gagne's **La conquête** which will be released this fall. To the general public he was best known in this latter role: a cameraman making feature films.

This was and still is unfortunate, for he started directing films in his own right as early as 1958. But these were documentaries, and as such never received the enormous publicity which accompanies a feature film, a "real" film. Many moviegoers were never aware that Labrecque was also the director of **60 cycles, La visite du général de Gaulle, Essai à la mille** or **Les canots de glace**.

Because of this continuity in his films, the best introduction to Labrecque and to **Les smattes** is through the short and medium length films which he directed. It is a shame that these films are not more readily available to the general public, for they reveal his masterful technique and his devotion to the subjects he films. **La visite du général de Gaulle** illustrates well Labrecque's characteristic ability to let his subjects speak for themselves. Labrecque followed de Gaulle from Quebec city to Montreal during the general's last visit to the province. The day culminated with de Gaulle's now-famous declaration from the city hall in support of Québec Libre. Watching the film, one feels, with de Gaulle, the enthusiasm of the crowds, the repeated receptions, the admiration of the man. Never is one side-tracked by the technical difficulties, though these must have been enormous. Labrecque knows how to efface himself and to adapt his camera to the subject.

Even in his first fiction film, **Les smattes**, this ability to permit direct expression by the actors is critical, and produces some of the best moments in the film: Marcel Sabourin improvising a funeral oration as the village priest, or the Gaspésian farmer who sets fire to his own home as he abandons his village. The simplicity of these scenes only increases their forcefulness and truth.

When Labrecque films, he witnesses for Québec. He has always defined himself as a witness, and always wanted it this way. His lens testifies to the country, its realities, its aspirations. In **Les smattes**, as Labrecque goes from documentary to fiction, the emphasis remains the same, to reveal the reality of Quebec. But for Labrecque, this does not mean to recreate reality through fiction, but rather to integrate fictional matter into an already authentic situation.

In this instance, the situation was the closing of seventeen villages in Québec's impoverished Gaspé region, and the removal of their populations so as to turn the land back into forest. Filmed in Saint-Paulin-Dalibaire, it is the story of the resignation and the exodus of the villagers whom the government is sending to the city. But, because two young men (played by the Pilon brothers, Donald and Daniel) refuse to be sent away, it becomes the story of resistance and revolt. With the two young men, Labrecque introduces the fictional element into what would otherwise have been a documentary. They are at home in the woods, and want to stay on even if the others go away. They have a right to this land. An accident during target practice wounds a government official, and the boys go underground, retreating into the forest. The story is simple enough, even banal. But because it takes place in Québec, and in the social and political climate which has led to outrageous violence, this story too becomes dramatic and eventually tragic.

The scenario is very good, and was written jointly by Clément Perron (who was responsible for **Mon oncle Antoine**) and Jean-Claude and Lise Labrecque. But the film has certain limits. The film opens with a scene of a Saturday night dance in the church basement. Marcel Martel and his band are singing old French folk songs, and more recent ones, glorifying the beauties of the Gaspé. This scene is intercut with stills of abandoned farms and homes, the Gaspé of the seventeen villages, the Gaspé of the present. This contrast between the folklore and the realities focuses the film from its beginning on the village itself and upon the government's decision to close it down. This is the real story, the social violence in Québec involving hundreds of families being moved off the farms which they claimed from the forest sixty years before. This is the story one would have liked to follow. Once the two men are introduced, the village as such is neglected, dropped out, and we are moved into a forest hide-a-way to wait with the two brothers for the police. Instead of an important social drama, **Les smattes** becomes a personal story, the tale of these young men who, like others of their age, would rather profit from their youth and freedom than fit into some government scheme.

When the script removes the emphasis from the village and focuses on the two men, the film becomes unbalanced. One becomes unsure which of the two stories is the more important and wonders what the director intended. With hindsight, it becomes clear that **Les smattes** depicts the birth of violence for the two men; a simple accident changes passive resistance to flight, and the clumsy intervention of the police soon leads to overreactions from these "forces of order", obliging the men to arm themselves and to resist. This is finally the drama of **Les smattes**, and not the story of the abandoned villages. And this too is the story of Québec, of October, and of the FLQ. This leitmotiv of violence pervades the film. What began as a simple gesture of self-affirmation is refused. The men cannot live in Québec as they choose to live. The reaction is begun which leads to tragedy and death.

The film does not end with "the end". Labrecque has written "to be continued" on the last scene, and so we wait for the next film The story he tells, that of Québec and its violence, is not over either, so this is only normal. In the meantime, Labrecque has made a creditable start with this first feature film, and we are anxious for more.

*Jean-Pierre Tadros*

*Jean-Pierre Tadros is film critic for the Montreal daily* Le Devoir *and editor-publisher of the monthly* Cinéma Québec.

# IN THE WORKS

Herewith, as complete and up-to-date as we can make it, a necessarily brief summary of recent Canadian independent feature-film activity. Productions that have (to the best of our knowledge) received assistance from the Canadian Film Development Corporation are indicated by an asterisk. (Assembled with the help of the Cinémathèque Québecoise.)

Claude Jutra has now finished shooting on his **Kamouraska*** and the film is scheduled to open next March. The picture is being co-produced by Les Productions Carle-Lamy and Mag Bodard (**Parapluies de Cherbourg**, etc.), who is also distributing the film in all French-language territories outside Quebec.

Les Films Mutuels (see In the Works, last issue) has announced the following productions and opening dates: Jean-Claude Lord's **Les colombes*** (October 5); Denis Héroux's **Quelques arpents de neige*** (this Christmas); Gilles Carle's **La mort d'un bûcheron** (next January; this is a co-production with Carle-Lamy and stars Pauline Julien, Marcel Sabourin, Daniel Pilon, Willie Lamothe, and Denise Filiatreault); Denis Héroux's **J'ai mon voyage** (next March); and Pierre Duceppe's **Pleure pas Germaine** (next April). Details on the first two films in ITW last issue; more on the last two films — hopefully — in the next issue.

The same firm also has, in various stages of preparation: **Pierre et Laura** (directed by Raphael Lévy); prolific Denis Héroux's **The Captors** (based on the novel by John Farris); and **The Sparrow's Fall** (produced by Jean Zaloum, and based on the Governor General's Award-winning novel by Fred Bodsworth). The company is also co-producing **Douce est la revanche (Revenge Is Sweet)**, Marc

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Simenon's film starring James Coburn, Mylène Demongeot, and Claude Léveillée, to be shot in Canada, France and Italy in August and September.

Also in the Montreal area, Jacques Giroux is producing and directing **Dead Issue**, a feature-length production in 16mm colour. Total budget is around $50,000 and some shooting in Mexico will follow the Montreal schedule before the film is complete.

Dermet Productions of Toronto has now completed **Wedding in White***, starring Donald Pleasence, Carol Kane, and Canadians Doug McGrath and Paul Bradley (of **Goin' Down the Road** fame). The film, set in a small, poor Canadian town in 1943-44, is to be released (by Cinepix in Canada, Avco-Embassy in the US) the first week of October. Screenplay and direction by Bill Fruet (of whom more below); produced by John Vidette.

Pleasence, meanwhile, has been signed to star (along with Kate Reid) in **The Rainbow Boys***, tentatively scheduled to start shooting in August in the Fraser Canyon area of the British Columbia interior in mid-August. A comedy, the film is to be produced by Montreal's Potterton Productions (Gerald Potterton directing) and is budgeted at around $500,000.

John Board, assistant director of **Wedding in White** (as he was for **Act of the Heart**, **Rip-Off**, and **Eliza's Horoscope**) is now shooting a film of his own, **The Merry Wives of Tobias Rouke**. Harold Greenberg (president of Bellevue-Pathé labs) is executive producer of this 85-minute comedy, which stars Paul Bradley (see above), Ratch Wallace and Linda Sorenson (**McCabe and Mrs. Miller**). The story is set in Ontario about 1850 and follows the exploits of a travelling snake-oil salesman (Bradley). Director of Photography is Montreal's Paul Vanderlinden, and sometime TAKE ONE contributor Alan Collins (**Von Richthofen and Brown**) is editing.

Bill Fruet, meanwhile, has scripted **Out*** (also entitled **Spring Coolie**), a first feature for ex-CBC director David Acomba. Producer is Jim Margellos (who played the same role on Tom Shandel's recently opened — see review this issue — **Another Smith for Paradise***, and also for Robert Altman). The film, which stars Luke Askew, Patty Oatman, and Danny Freedman (**Fortune and Men's Eyes**), is being shot around Lethbridge, Alberta and in Vancouver, and is the first film to be shot in Canada using the newly-developed Todd-AO 35mm anamorphic lens system.

Shooting has now been completed on **Follow the North Star**. The feature-length film, directed by Eric Till (whose **Fan's Notes*** was shown at Cannes and Berlin but has yet to open commercially), is about the operations of the "underground railroad" in the U.S. during the period of the Civil War, and is being produced by John Bassett's Agincourt Productions (along with Erin Beckwith and David Gerber) for television release, with a view to its being the pilot for a possible new series. The script called for a typical ante-bellum southern-style plantation, and one was found (attention producers!) near Nashville — Nashville, Ontario that is.

Shooting on **The Farm** (see ITW, last issue), which is to star Christopher Lee, has been postponed due to some previous commitments of Lee's in England.

Tentatively scheduled for Vancouver-area shooting are: **Why Sister Susannah Must Be Protected Against the Forces of Evil and Wickedness** ($1,000,000 budget; a Universal co-production; if Daryl Duke directs — as expected — his own **Ecstasy of Rita Joe** will be postponed); **Calico Highway** ($175,000 budget; to be directed by Robert Elliott, 26, and manager of Famous Players' twin theatres in West Vancouver); and **Doomsday Train** (to be produced by Rudy Moder in association with Vidtronics, the distribution subsidiary of Technicolor). Hopefully, more details on these as they get closer to realization.

And, finally (as they say) in the news: Toronto's IATSE Local 644C has turned down an application for membership from Richard Leiterman. The powerful 65-member cameramen's union turned down the application, according to Glen Ferrier (the local's Canadian representative) by "by no means a close vote. There was a wide spread." Ferrier admitted that qualifications, calibre of performance and reputation have nothing to do with whether or not such applications are accepted: "It just depends on who goes to the meetings, you know, how they feel . . ." Leiterman won the Wilderness Award for the tv special *One More River*, won an Emmy for *Stokowski* (NET), was nominated for a second Emmy for *Margaret Meade's New Guinea Journal*, has been director of photography for many award-winning tv documentaries, plus the Canadian feature films **A Married Couple**, **Goin' Down the Road**, **Rip-Off**, and **Wedding in White**. At the same meeting, the members accepted the application for membership of one Nicholas Allen Wolfe, who is understood to have worked on some commercials.

**STOP PRESS:**

**Lies My Father Told Me*** now seems set to go ahead, with CFDC approval (Jan Kadar directing, but is Zero Mostel still starring?). Columbia Pictures is an investor and the distributor. Southam Publications has also put some money into the film, and the producers were able to obtain a loan from the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (the only other Canadian film that has succeeded in borrowing money from a major bank was **Mahoney's Estate*** — The Bank of Montreal in that case).

Crawley Films, currently distributing the successful **Rowdyman***, are completing a film on Janis Joplin.

Shooting starts the first week in September on **Conquest of the Deep***, a large-budget science-fiction drama that has obtained the cooperation of the Canadian navy. David Perlmutter and Harold Greenberg are Executive Producers; Director is Dan Petrie. Several majors stars are being considered for the lead.

Darren McGavin will be involved in a picture to be shot in September in Nova Scotia.

Apjac will be shooting **Kyle** at Montreal's Man and His World (ex-Expo 67) site after the fair's closing this fall.

With CFDC approval and investment-money from Britain's Hemdale, **La Guerre, Yes Sir*** is now set for shooting in October.

George Kaczender (who directed **Don't Let the Angels Fall** for the National Film Board) is now set to direct the independently-produced **U Turn***. Harold Greenberg again as Executive Producer.

Don Brittain will be directing **Godsend*** — a Northern Ontario mining story — for Potterton Productions this winter.

Les Productions Carle-Lamy start shooting on **Allen Thunder***, directed by Claude Fournier and starring Don Sutherland, this August 28th.

John Kemeny is hard at work putting

together a production of Mordecai Richler's **The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz.**

And all laboratory-work for **Jesus Christ, Superstar,** currently being shot in Israel, is being handled by Bellevue-Pathé of Montreal's Tel Aviv branch.

**Hal Aigner Jon Carroll Michael Goodwin**

We're instituting a Star System, folks, and for the moment it works like this:

( ) Beneath contempt
(★) Contemptible
(★★) Good rainy night flick
(★★★) Excellent
(★★★★) Critics' choice — miss at your peril

It turned out to be much harder than we expected to think of suitable categories, and we're not locked into the ones we came up with. Suggestions from TAKE ONE readers are hereby solicited. And now, as they say, here's Hollywood:

**Chato's Land** (dir. Michael Winner): Charles Bronson and Jack Palance star in this excellent western — which can be viewed both as an action thriller and a parable of American imperialism. Bronson turns in a fascinating performance as a halfbreed Indian — a performance made doubly impressive by the fact that he has only one line in English, and damn few in Indian. A tight, unified film, with not a wasted shot or an unnecessary line. (★★★★)

**The Culpepper Cattle Co.** (dir. Dick Richards): An exciting western, and an interesting study of the morality of violence and non-violence in a brutal universe. The American frontier has never been presented so realistically (except, perhaps, in Monte Hellman's **Ride In the Whirlwind**). A serious, considered film with a solid underpinning of philosophical analysis. (★★★)

**The Last Movie** (dir. Dennis Hopper): An uncompromising avant-garde film that deserves much better than it got from the critics. **Last Movie** is undeniably flawed, but Hopper's complex editing structure is fascinating, and the notion of the film as a self-destructing work of art is most appropriate. This is an ugly film — by intent, not by accident — and that alone makes it a standout among recent Hollywood "product." (★★★)

**The Godfather** (dir. Francis Coppola): Leige of a kingdom within a nation, Don Vito Corleonne exercises the duties and privileges of a benevolent monarch while waging a protracted war. The fact that he's a gangster makes the tale American. The fact that Coppola directed makes it good. (★★★)

**What's Up Doc?** (dir. Peter Bogdanovich): Well, it isn't **Bringing Up Baby,** but it's still the funniest film to come out of Hollywood in years. Bogdanovich keeps the pace beautifully breakneck. Still, isn't it time for Bogdanovich to make a *Bogdanovich* movie? (★★★)

**The Concert For Bangla Desh** (dir. Saul Swimmer): Why blow up 16mm to 70? Why make the soundtrack oppressively loud? Why aren't the musicians together — individually or as a group? Why aren't the cameramen awake? Still, there is something undeniably interesting in footage of George, Ringo, Dylan *et al*, so . . . (★★)

**Fillmore** (dir. Rick Heffron): As a documentary of the closing week at the Fillmore West (as well as the death of a lifestyle), **Fillmore** is of considerable interest. As a music film, however, it leaves much to be desired. The Dead and Santana are terrific, but there's too much Bill Graham and not nearly enough rock. The photography is standard neo-Woodstock, with pointless super-impositions and endless random psychedelia. (★★)

**Fuzz** (dir. Richard Colla): Something like an attempt to piece together a body without the skeleton. This crime comedy gets off to a rollicking Keystone Kops start, but ends without a lick of internal cohesion or grace. (★★)

**The Honkers**: Arresting rodeo arena footage, able camerawork, sound pacing and editing elevate this film about a macho rodeo rider (James Coburn) who can't stay on top of his private life. You won't take anything home with you, but it's decent entertainment. (★★)

**Is There Sex After Death?**: Much of this parody on sex education films is old hat — so old that the fabric is disintegrating, There are a score or so of funny moments, but the film is far, far too long. Nothing to get hot about. (★★)

**Slaughterhouse Five** (dir. George Roy Hill): A curious, hit-and-miss adaptation of Vonnegut's book on the firebombing of Dresden. The movie sorely lacks Vonnegut's narrative voice, and rather misrepresents the point of the book. It's extremely sexist, with the women shown as disgusting leeches or dazzling sex objects. Still, there are sequences that capture Vonnegut's ironic tone. (★★)

**AWOL**: A simpering attempt to deal with U.S. military deserters in Sweden. Technically it wavers between travelogue style and dada parody. The film shares with **Fritz the Cat** and **Jerusalem File** the subliminal message that young middle-class whites can't further revolutions, only fuck them up. (★)

**The Dead Are Alive** (dir. Armand Crispino): Our ultimate fantasy is that everyone connected with this reeking mess saw George Kuchar's parody, **Pagan Rhapsody**, and decided to make a straight Hollywood version without telling anyone. (★)

**The Legend of Nigger Charley**: Guess what word is used at least 100 times in the course of this shoddy western? But that's just fine, folks, because Charley and his pals off at least 50 racist, psychotic whites. If box-ofice receipts run strong, we can look forward to **The Saga of Jigaboo Lincoln Jones.** (★)

**Living Free** (dir. Jack Couffer): How long can you milk a mama lion? Elsa (who will be remembered for her stunning performance in **Born Free**) dies leaving three cubs stranded in an unfair universe. The tale of their rescue from the cruel hand of fate might have been salvaged by the addition of a third more wild animal footage and that much less plot. (★)

**Silent Running** (dir. Doug Trumbull): This failing attempt at an outer space movie with an ecological theme is crippled by absurd scientific errors (no, sound doesn't travel in a vacuum), poor editing and worse scripting. A classic example of what happens when the finest technology is made available to people who

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lack the imagination to use it. (★)

**Stand Up and Be Counted**: This feeble "Women's Lib" comedy begins with an accurate glimpse of the horrors of male chauvinism, but deteriorates fast as women are made the butts of all the jokes. Wake up, fellas. (★)

# MIND'S EYE

Shortly before the opening engagements of **A Clockwork Orange**, I travelled to Borehamwood, outside London, to have lunch with Stanley Kubrick. The man I met — soft-spoken, wide ranging in his reading and interests, immediately accessible and friendly — was just the outer edges of the man who directed **Lolita, Dr. Strangelove** and **2001: A Space Odyssey**. It takes years of close acquaintance before one can write authoritatively about an artist. I had only six hours of conversation.

Kubrick takes a dim view of the current craze that would make opiates the religion of the masses. Yet he knows that a good part of **2001**'s popularity stems from an advertising campaign that heralded the film as "the ultimate trip" and which encouraged people to see it stoned. He knows that he has become a cult figure — irrationally liked and promoted as a "mind-blower," and irrationally disliked and denigrated by those sceptical of any mass media cult. The controversies surrounding his films are noisy and mindless but they serve a purpose: they publicize his films. It is my guess that the career of Orson Welles is not lost on Kubrick: who wants to be known as an unemployed genius — making **Citizen Kane** when you're 26, and narrating Eastern Airlines "Wings of Man" commercials when you're 57? Welles is generally revered by critics, while Kubrick is treated as a Goliath that must be slain.

"Have you ever read a critic who taught you anything new about your films?" I asked him.

"No." came the quick reply. "Very few critics work carefully, thoughtfully enough. To see a film once and write a review is an absurdity."

"Are there no critics who work at their jobs as diligently as a film director does?" I asked.

"I don't think any of them could possibly take as much trouble to write a review as we take to make a film," he replied, "but maybe it doesn't take *that* much trouble. Unfortunately the reviews that distinguish most critics are bad reviews, which are easy to write and fun to write but are absolutely useless."

"Do critics have any measurable influence at the box office?"

"The only way a picture sustains itself — because advertising only affects a week or so of a film's initial receipts — is by people saying with enough emphasis to their friends, you *must* see it. There is no movie-going habit of any size any more, and a film has to overcome a lot of inertia to make people interested in going out to see it. Critics only appear to have importance when their views coincide with those of the audience."

Kubrick's films require large budgets. Ten million for **2001**. Two and a half million for **A Clockwork Orange**. His next projects — a film about Napoleon and an adaptation of Arthur Schnitzler's *Rhapsody: A Dream Novel* — require substantial sums. Most directors never successfully resolve the dilemma of wanting to be artists and needing to be popular. A distressing aspect of intellectual and artistic growth is that it principally means *outgrowing* other people: there are progressively fewer people to share one's ideas, and who understand, without over-simplification, what one is trying to communicate.

Kubrick's solution is "ambiguity." A film-goer is obliged to understand a great deal more of Ingmar Bergman's **Persona** or **The Passion of Anna** before realizing their worth than he does of **Dr. Strangelove** or **2001**. Kubrick makes his films so that they can be enjoyed superficially *or* in depth. In so doing he greatly broadens the spectrum of viewers who like *something* in his work. Bergman's films don't offer the public this option. Either you respond with a full, complex understanding or else you become baffled and bored. In Kubrick's view: "The emotions of people are far more similar than their intellects. The common bond is their subconscious emotional reaction. Watching a film is like having a daydream. It operates on portions of your mind that are only reached by dreams or dramas, and there you can explore things without any responsibility of conscious ego or conscience."

"**A Clockwork Orange** asks provocative questions to which there are no easy answers," I remarked. "Do you anticipate that violent behaviour will be a growing problem in the

*John Hofsess is a Contributing Editor. He also writes a regular column for the Canadian magazine* Maclean's.


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future?"

"Yes, especially by those who fail to appreciate the realities of a complex society," he replied. "There is an accelerating erosion of any kind of mystique which authority may have once had, and an over-awareness of the romantic concept of rebellion. Mind you I don't regard **A Clockwork Orange** as being primarily or even significantly, a topical, social story. I use Alex to explore an aspect of the human personality. He does things which one knows are wrong, and yet you find yourself being taken in by him and accepting his frame of reference. As in a dream, the film demands a suspension of moral judgment."

"Are you as dark visioned about man as your films appear to indicate?" I asked. "Is hope only possible in the world of **2001** with its white, clean, aesthetically perfect environment in which virtually all human problems have been removed?"

"A satirist is someone who has a very skeptical, pessimistic view of human nature," he replied, "but who still has the optimism to make some sort of joke out of it. However brutal the joke might be."

Kubrick's films are filled with tension. He knows that life is a constant struggle between creative and destructive impulses, between people who build and those who destroy. "We are such rapacious creatures," he remarked. "How many trees have to be chopped down to give one individual all the newspapers he uses in a lifetime? How many animals have to be killed to feed him? How much of the earth's precious and limited mineral resources are consumed to give him his technological comforts? And for what? What does man ever give back?" The answer, in most cases, is "Nothing." With Kubrick, the answer is the triumph of art.

*John Hofsess*

# OVER LOOKED & UNDER RATED

If you've ever hitched into Amsterdam, see **Traffic**, the latest film by that gentle anarchist, Jacques Tati.

Bo Widerberg's **Adalen 31** is a good before-demonstration film, and the much-misunderstood and lyrical **Ballad of Joe Hill**, is the perfect after-demonstration movie.

Kobayashi's **The Woman of the Dunes**, intended originally as a part of **Kwaidan**, is a marvel. Haunting, other-worldly, and frightening in its implications.

Any film with the Preservation Hall Jazz Band is gotta be worth seeing, and **W.U.S.A.** is. Conclusive proof — if any is needed — that Joanne Woodward is America's finest actress.

**Family Life** by the team of Mercer, Loach, and Garnett, who gave us **Kes**, is the most radical film to come from Britain since I don't know when. I'll take bets it's never released in America.

Frank Perry's **Doc** is the only Western ever made which tells the true story of what *really* happened at the O.K. Corral. And speaking of Westerns, **Monte Walsh** is a good one.

*Bill Sherman*

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*Bill Sherman teaches at The University of Wales*

# OLDIES BUT GOODIES

**A new column wherein we deal with films we should have dealt with much sooner.**

To oversimplify, films that are social tend to fall into two types: film essays (**October, British Sounds, La Hora de los Hornos**); and films that simulate historical events and are dramatic in structure (**Grapes of Wrath, Salt of the Earth, Chapayev**). Recently, the film-essay has captured our attention: in films by Godard and Solanas the aesthetic frontiers of film are being explored. However, given Godard's dismissal of the more conventional film form, we can easily overlook unexpected achievements in this field.

This is especially true in the case of Pontecorvo's **Burn**. Godard aims to make the spectator analyse the image: the spectator is "alienated" to attain a rational awareness. Pontecorvo, however, is not as suspicious of emotion. He has said that he aimed in **Burn** "to join the romantic adventure and the film of ideas." Pontecorvo shows us, with analytic clarity, a triumph of imperialism in the mid-nineteenth century. We are presented with a detached perspective on the working of history, as in Godard. However, we also totally empathize with the rebels, feel outrage and pathos at their defeat. We are inspired to sympathize with their modern counterparts, while being made aware of mistakes that should not be repeated. In this respect, **Burn** succeeds in areas Godard has, unfortunately, thus far not attempted.

Marlon Brando plays an English lord and government agent (a nineteenth century CIA type) who comes to the Portuguese island of Quemada with the apparent intention of aiding the growing native slave revolt. In time the brief alliance between the colonists (national bourgeoisie) and the ex-slaves vanishes, and Brando, ten years later, returns to Quemada, this time in the pay of the British sugar company that now controls the island, to crush the resistance of the black ex-slaves, now sugar workers, and secure the island for British neo-colonialism.

**Burn** is extremely detached and objective, yet dramatically intense. As it is an allegory of the triumph of imperialism, the aura of determinism that pervades the film is historicized, and takes on an especially terrible quality: the rebellion of black sugar cutters fails (as it did in history) and we are filled with rage that transfers to contemporary parallels. My terminology may seem too political for a would-be commercial film, but I am within the film's frame of reference.

In Godard's recent political films, a Marxist vision is often presented to the audience by direct address, or by the analytical sound track: in **Burn**, the perspective on class struggle and historical development is embodied in the action. With a plot that explicitly delineates the differences between a bourgeois-democratic revolution, and a national liberation struggle that is also directed against capitalism, **Burn** is certainly one of the most radical films to get mass distribution in recent years.

During the first stage of revolt, we observe Brando's appeal for the colonists' support. He asks whether, from an economic point of view, they prefer a wife or a whore: "What is the cost of the product, which in this case is love?" Then he extends this to whether slave or wage-slave labor would be more profitable to them, and we understand the real reason behind their subsequent "liberaton" of the slaves. "The whore is yours only when you need her. You pay her only for her service. You pay her by the hour . . . Now which do you find more convenient — a slave or a paid worker?" In this way he forges an alliance between the colons and the natives: an alliance that is demystified for the audience. Together they overthrow the Portuguese and establish a bourgeois-democratic republic in which slavery is abolished.

However, soon the "independent" colonists sell out to British sugar companies. The blacks, exploited as sugar wage laborers, are driven to rebellion again. British troops arrive. The settlers ask Brando if the guerrillas can be persuaded to lay down their arms and collaborate, as they did after the Portuguese were driven out. Brando says that this time the contradictions are different, it is a new historical stage: the native population has nothing in common with the now compradorized colons. "Very often, between one historical period and another, ten years is enough to reveal the contradictions of a whole century." The film thus both dissects and dramatizes the historical stages of anti-imperialist struggles, to reveal the economic basis and shifting class contradictions that Marxist theorists, from Lenin to Mao, have analyzed.

The historic realism of the film extends to the personal level. Pontecorvo on the set of **Burn** acknowledged his debt to Italian neo-realism. The leader of the rebels (Jose Delores) is Evaristo Marques, an amateur who invests the role with a dignity and humility rarely seen in film. In one scene, after the first rebel victories, he enters the capital city and walks through an enthusiastic crowd: in a long tracking shot, we see him becoming aware of his position as leader while remaining essentially one with the mass of liberated slaves who are welcoming him.

Pontecorvo's ability to personalize and give dignity to his crowd scenes is worth noting, as there has been a tendency in the United States and Western Europe to polarize as antithetical the concepts of feeling or emotions versus analysis, and the individual versus the mass film. It is unfortunate that this polarization has sometimes tended to split those aspects of experience (feeling/thought; individual/mass) that one would expect a communist perspective to unify.

With the present revived concern for the committed film and its aesthetics, it is perhaps worth recalling earlier debates on the subject, which have particular relevance to **Burn**, and the nature of the film's "realism." The debate on the question of individual versus mass film between Eisenstein and Pudovkin was in part a reflection of a more basic matter; how to present "social reality" in terms of people, and how to do this in a way that would most intensely affect the general viewer. This would be achieved, it was felt, by combining mimesis (a close attention to sensory detail, lively surface realism, etc.) with fidelity to what, in Marxist terms, is seen to be the larger, encompassing reality of historical materialism, in terms of the interaction of social forces and their rep-

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**No. 1 (published Sept. 1966):** An interview with Alfred Hitchcock; a review of **Torn Curtain**; reviews from the Seventh Montreal International Film Festival.

**No. 2 (Nov. 1966):** An interview with Marshall McLuhan on cinema; Paul Krassner on "How Soft Was My Pornography"; interviews with Quebec filmmakers Arthur Lamothe and Jean-Claude Labrecque; a review of **The Wild Angels.**

**No. 3 (Jan. 1967):** An interview with Jean-Luc Godard; reviews of **A Fistful of Dollars, Loves of a Blonde**, and **Fahrenheit 451.**

**No. 4 (April 1967):** An interview with Canadian filmmaker Larry Kent; an article comparing viewers' reactions to the same news event as reported on b&w and on color tv; reviews of **Blow-Up, The Connection**, and **Chelsea Girls**.

**No. 5 (June 1967):** A series of articles on the Hollywood Blacklist (including personal reminiscences by Millard Lampell and Herbert Biberman); reviews of the films of Expo 67 and of **Accident, Cul-de-Sac**, and **Au Hasard Balthazar.**

**No. 6 (Aug. 1967):** An interview with Canadian filmmaker Don Owen; the much-reprinted (*Architectural Digest, Asahi Shimbun, Intellectual Digest*) and oft-referred-to (*Star Weekly, Playboy, Wall Street Journal, etc.*) "Intersex" article by Robert Russel; an interview with Kenneth Anger; Arthur Penn on **Bonnie and Clyde.**

**No. 7 (Oct. 1967):** An interview with Jean Renoir; an article on Quebec filmmaker Jean-Pierre Lefebvre; reviews of **Warrendale, Portrait of Jason, Privilege** and **The Trip.**

**No. 8 (Dec. 1967):** An article on Richard Lester and **How I Won The War**; a report (by Joyce Wieland on "North America's Second All-Women Film Crew"; reviews of **The Fearless Vampire Killers, Persona**, and **The Ernie Game.**

**No. 9 (April 1968):** An article on Silvio Narizzano; William K. Everson on Laurel and Hardy; reviews of **The President's Analyst, In Cold Blood, The Battle of Algiers**, and **Elvira Madigan.**

**No. 10 (June 1968):** Alfred Hitchcock talking about some of the special effects used in **The Birds**; a report on Godard's visit to Hollywood (discussions with Sam Fuller, King Vidor, Roger Corman, and Peter Bogdanovich).

**No. 11 (Sept. 1968):** Analyses of film violence by Fredric Wertham and Paul Krassner; a selection from the letters of Groucho Marx; an interview with the creator of the special effects for **2001**; reviews of **Weekend, The Green Berets**, and **The Bride Wore Black.**

**No. 12 (Nov. 1968):** A survey of the Cuban cinema (biographies and filmographies of four major directors); some comments by Roger Corman; Mordecai Richler on writing for the movies; and a review of **Bullitt.**

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resentatives at various stages in history.

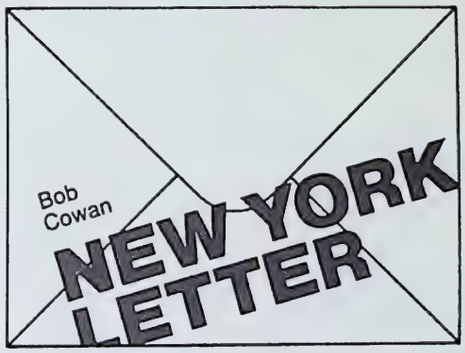
These two aspects, which we have been pointing to in **Burn**, can perhaps be clarified by another scene from the film. Teddy Sanchez, the idealistic, nominal leader of the colonists, who believes firmly in an independent Quemada, is deposed and executed by the comprador class that has sold out to British imperialism. The scene of his defeat is his attempt to distribute bread to the starving native population, together with speeches about "national unity." The mimetic realism of the scene is intense. We view the crowd both in long shots and close-ups. The eyes of men, women and children express a weariness of oppression, and a desire for something better. The camera focuses several times on a toothless old woman: she stares at the food wagons, finally rushing forward yelling "Bread!"

By combining this mimetic realism with the larger historic reality, the film successfully conveys the central point that "history is made by men." The starving crowd rushing forward to seize the bread, and being shot down by the ruling-class's soldiers, reveals the fatuousness of Teddy's "class-alliance" dream, that is out of accord with reality. But it is the people reacting that we see, not simply an impersonal clash of "historic forces." The two levels of "realism" in the film illustrate the way in which "freedom is the recognition of necessity": people are at once the moving force in history, and subject to its laws.

Throughout the latter half of the film, the focus shifts entirely to Brando using counter-insurgency tactics against the guerrillas. Jose is not seen, and is given a significant speech only after he is captured. The effect is to reduce the struggle, the peoples' war, to a hunt, which we see from the perspective of the ruling class hunter (Brando) to whom all initiative is attributed. This is not only defeatist, but insofar as Pontecorvo generalizes to explain Brando's superiority as that of advanced technique, it is implied that this is always the case: the successful struggle of the Vietnamese people against military aggression by successive technically advanced imperialist powers is just one example to the contrary.

But even if the film's defeatism *is* marked, we must realize this is a complex and continuing problem in political film (Eisenstein's **Strike**, for example, is far more defeatist), and that **Burn** is less so than its immediate tradition: neo-realism. If we compare **Burn** with early Soviet political films that deal with defeats which are victories only in a larger historical context, some notable qualities emerge. Most audiences will remember the Odessa steps scene in **Potemkin** and the massacres in Pudovkin's films in which reactionary soldiers are presented by fragments of jackboots, aimed rifles firing volleys, etc. By means of these visual fragments the oppressors' army appears as an abstract and formidable machine. When, however, the guerrillas emerge from the flaming bush and are shot in **Burn**, the camera is focussed upon them; sometimes we share their perspective, or appear to be close by as they run through the bush. The guns that kill them are in the distance, are not magnified by the camera angle. At times a guerrilla dies in the foreground while puppet soldiers appear in the smoke-filled background, defined only as the cause of a heroic death. The effect of **Potemkin** and **Mother** is reversed, in visual terms, to de-emphasize and demystify the power of the enemy.

Although **Burn**'s narrative is fundamentally defeatist the visual style of scenes like this testify to something new and important: Pontecorvo's revolutionary use of humanism. This shows clearly in his treatment of the puppet army, blacks who fight for their oppressors against Jose's liberation. When they are shown going into battle they are rendered with a personal fidelity that is in some ways akin to Pontecorvo's presentation of Jose's army, or of the crowd of villagers waiting for bread. When Jose is captured, he tells the puppet soldiers that revolution will succeed in Quemada at such time as they become conscious of the source of their oppression and come over. The focus on individuals, that in the case of Brando contributes to the film's defeatism, is a contradiction, for it also conveys the film's profoundest Marxist message: that it is people becoming conscious of their oppression in concrete situations of class struggle that are the motive force for revolution. *Michael Klein*




"We need another and a wiser and perhaps a more mystical concept of animals. Remote from universal nature, and living by complicated artifice, man in civilization surveys the creatures through the glass of his knowledge and sees thereby a feather magnified and the whole image in distortion. We patronize them for their incompleteness, for their tragic fate of having taken form so far below ourselves. And therein we err, and greatly err. For the animal shall not be measured by man. In a world older and more complete than ours they move finished and complete, gifted with extensions of the senses we have lost or never attained, living by voices we shall never hear. They are not brethren; they are not underlings; they are other nations, caught with ourselves in the net of life and time, fellow prisoners of the splendour and travail of the earth."

Henry Beston — *The Outermost House*

The preceeding quote is the introductory preface to a 20-minute film by Nancy Graves entitled **Izy Boukir**, edited by Linda Leeds, camera by David Anderson, sound by Jack Baron. One would expect the film to be full of such standard handsome creatures as horses with flowing manes, beautiful soaring birds, multi-coloured exotic denizens of the deep, all animals that would easily reinforce the attitudes expressed in the preamble. But camels? Those ungainly, preposterous creatures that somehow do not seem to fit at all? Yet there they are, and they make any of our interpretations and prejudices towards the animal kingdom look absurd.

**Izy Boukir** was shot in the Sahara during 18 days by Nancy Graves and her crew. Mrs. Graves' previous preoccupations as a painter and sculptor were with camels and camel forms. The film exists as a natural extension of these interests. A herd of camels, majestic and primeval, move across the screen like the only inhabitants of an undiscovered landscape, strange and restless in their passage from the outside of the frame to the interior and past it, returning over and over, a herd of giants searching for a resting place. Their movements are dance-like, every change of position seems choreographed in advance by a force that has somehow never touched any of us. They are regal in every one of their small activities and motions, oblivious to outside turmoils. Their jaw movements are shot in close-up ... the image is as humorous as it is dignified. Their beauty is a functional beauty, it is never grotesque. The huge undulating bodies are mountains and hillsides in motion. The texture of their hides is the texture of rough soil. One with the earth they walk on, they belong to the planet — while we, by comparison, seem to be stumbling around like strangers in an alien environment.

**Solstice** is part three of a four-part work called **Oobieland** by Walter Ungerer. Each part can exist on its own as a separate film. **Solstice** is a surreal fantasy drama in which elusive figures, new-born in a fixed landscape environment, dissolve, enter and re-enter into time-present, at the least provocation. They are fragments of an imaginary world superimposed on a real landscape, living out their various adventures independent of their environment. They merge in and out of the landscape like phantoms, giving us glimpses of their fragmented activities. These personages exist in isolation and yet seem to be trying somehow to make contact with us as well as with each other. They glide through the seasons of the forest as if engaging in some cosmic game of hide and seek. One stares at what seems to be an empty forest, and then out of some corner or crevice figures emerge and disappear — just out of reach of our knowledge of them, tempting us, but never approaching too close. The forest is enchanted, and we are the intruders. One beautiful scene: a snow-filled landscape, still and expectant, held on camera for several minutes. A slow procession is dimly seen hovering on the edge of the horizon, accompanied by the plaintive beat of drums and the sound of violins as the raggedy procession moves nearer. The strollers are masked and costumed. As they approach, they slowly walk out of frame, finally dissolving in the landscape.

The images throughout the film have a grainy softness as if they had been traced with crayons on rough paper. Even though the film has a certain unevenness in sound quality, and some clumsiness in the editing, the poetic mood is generally sustained throughout. Another interesting section has a group of men in black suits seated about a white table with white coffee cups on it. The figures repeat small gestures over and over, much like a film loop, except rather than extending time through the use of repeated gestures, they seem trapped by it. Parts 1 and 2 of **Oobieland** are superfluous, and contain a lot of hand painted collage doodlings which are quite tedious. **Solstice** (part 3) would be better off without parts 1 and 2. One wonders why they are lumped together at all, since the hand painted clichés of 1 and 2 hardly prepare you for the genuine poetry that is to follow. Ungerer is 37, and has been making films since 1964. Past films include **The Tasmanian Devil, Meet Me Jesus,** and **A Lions Tale**. He is at present working on part 4 of the **Oobieland** series, called **The Terrible Mother**. His next project is a feature-length film called **The Murderess**, to be shot in Greece.

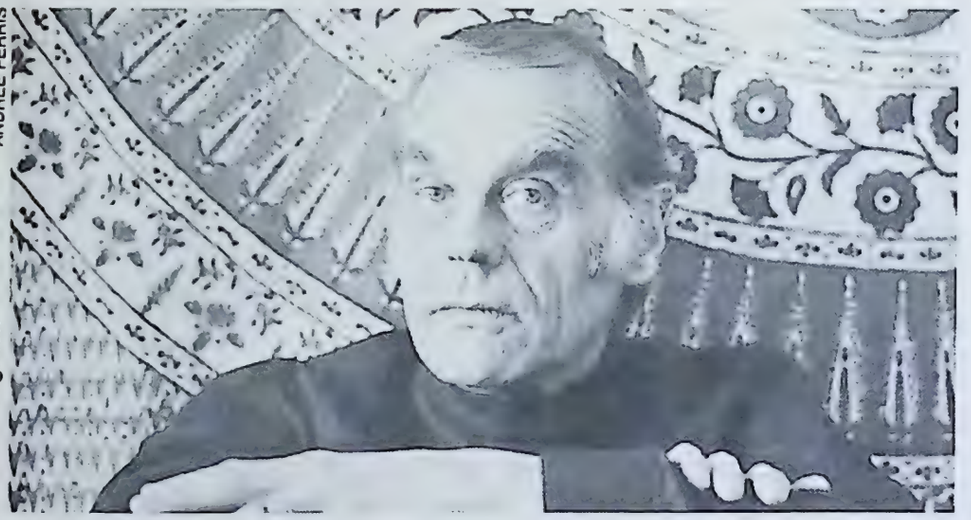
*Bob Cowan is a prize-winning Canadian filmmaker now living and working in New York City.*

# SAN FRANCISCO LETTER

Ever since 1948, whenever someone asked Mill Valley (California) filmmaker James Broughton why he started working with movies, he would most consistently reply with some form of: "It was an excuse to get outdoors into the sun."

Twenty-four years and ten films later, he has admitted to a certain inspiration from fellow poet, playwright and filmmaker Jean Cocteau. But that doesn't really work; the first motive better suits the man.

Broughton has recently completed the fifth and final work of a "celebration" series, a 45-minute film titled **Dreamwood**, which may mark his egress from cinema. Saddled once again with a $3,000 lab debt, the economic burden may prove fatal to his work.



ANDRÉE FERRIS

*James Broughton*

His absence will leave an appreciable vacuum in the Bay Area film community. Not only the forerunner of considerable local cinema activity, he has been the mentor of numerous other filmmakers as a teacher at San Francisco State College, and currently the San Francisco Art Institute.

Broughton is a pixie of a man, sporting a gleeful, almost lecherous laugh which is part of the ambience affecting his work. He has sought to produce, in his art, a sense of joy and affirmation — and his efforts are often contagiously successful. He is also an established poet whose previously published six volumes of verse have recently been collected into one tome titled *A Long Undressing*. His plays, notably *Bedlam in the Playground* and *How Pleasant It Is To Have Money*, have been produced locally.

In his own words, he is a white magician — and on occasion his works are billed alongside the darker intricacies of Kenneth Anger's Thelemite footage. His cinematic history divides into two distinct periods. From 1948 through 1953, he made five movies in which the theme of play is a consistent element. He began with **Mother's Day** and continued with a film a year as **Loony Tom, Adventures of Jimmy, Four In the Afternoon** and **The Pleasure Garden** came to the screens of art museums and experimental film festivals. (Dylan Thomas, incidentally, referred to **Four in the Afternoon**, a film exploring variations on the search for love, as: "Lovely and delicious, true cinematic poetry.")

For students of the technical, or even thematic, avant-garde, there is little new in these works. But exploration was not what Broughton had in mind. He wanted playfulness and a sense of lighthearted fun, and at moments these movies crackle with that life. Financial difficulties forced a 14-year hiatus, after which he returned with his finest work, **The Bed**, a 20-minute work which celebrates everything that can possibly be done in and around a mattress and a set of springs: birth, young love, old love, dreams, death and everything from fetishism to plain old lechery.

After **The Bed**, and once again on a yearly schedule, came **Nuptiae, This Is It, The Golden Positions**, and **Dreamwood**. None of the successive works ever topped **The Bed**, but they all have their moments.

What prompts **The Bed** into blossoming into full glory is that Broughton, ever concerned with spirituality and its manifold forms, leaves behind the available pantheon of legendary figures and creates a new myth of his own. He ignores the easy ground of historical associations, creating a visual rune which is able to cast its own spell on audiences. His other works suffer to the extent that they draw on previous incarnations — the repetitious use of, say, King James' or Michelangelo's Genesis turns archetypes into stereotypes.

**This Is It**, a nine and a half-minute Zen paen to his three year old son, barely suffers at all. The film adopts the form of a mantra dedicated to the "here and now," and tends to be repetitive in the sense that all mantras are. But **The Golden Positions**, an attempted poetic celebration of the human body, is almost plagiaristic in its advancement through a series of images so familiar that they make the film predictable and unexciting. The charge is doubled for **Dreamwood**, which views like an attempt to prove that anyone could have made **El Topo**. This 45-minute penetration into "the perilous forest of the Feminine Mysteries" holds not a single surprise or novel experience.

(In fairness, I screened **Dreamwood** in cramped quarters, on an extremely hot night, with the sound turned up oppressively loud, and a young woman in the audience who literally anticipated every scene with a shrill burst of hysterical laughter, but still ....)

**Dreamwood** is a bad closing scene for an artist who glowed with renewal after a 15-year absence from filmmaking. Hopefully, some dearly needed funds will sift his way and he can return again with just as much freshness and excitement.

*Hal Aigner*

*Hal Aigner edits the film reviews and feature articles section of a San Francisco Bay area entertainment bi-weekly called* The Night Times. *He has been a regular contributor to TAKE ONE for two years and has had work sporadically appear in* Rolling Stone, Rags, The Mother Earth News *and other journals.*

# WOMEN IN FILM

Susan Martin is depressed about media: "It's going more and more away from directly helping people." When I entered her apartment from the rain, I was told that my pulse would be taken. Susan is into acupuncture now (27 different analyses are made of the pulse to determine where the body is out of balance) and may produce a film about it with an all-female crew. Still, she would agree that the difference between directly helping people and the media is that not everybody who goes to movies or watches TV drops by your apartment. And it is not possible to get to all of theirs. Hence the need for filmmakers.

Susan was in London a couple of months ago for the opening of Peter Watkins' **Punishment Park**, which she produced. She got tired of giving interviews on the film (whose crew was half female) and gave one about women and film. Through that, she was asked to help give a program on the changing image of women in film for the British Film Society — a branch of the British Film Institute that brings films to members that they might otherwise not get a chance to see.

Of course, this program would include film clips mainly from male-made films, showing women as Hollywood (and Pinewood) had always done. Naturally, getting the program together was a long hard process. The British Film Society had chosen their own clips and arranged them chronologically — rather than provocatively, to stimulate conversation, the way Susan and Midge MacKenzie wanted to do it. In the end, they chose their own clips, but they couldn't actually cut the films, so the order was determined by the size of the film: a 16mm clip had to be followed by a 35. Then the casual seating arrangement they wanted, and had been promised, suddenly was changed to chairs on a stage with water glasses. "What I should have done," said Susan, "was say, 'OK, but I won't participate.' People don't learn from debating. They learn from hearing themselves and other people talk. If we sat in the audience and turned around to talk, it would underscore the idea that nobody's an expert, that we're all in the process of change."

Susan and Midge spent hours and hours a day looking at films to choose clips. And Susan was amazed. "I had no idea of the psychological impact of these films. When you sit down at a moviola and look at the way women have been treated, it's devastating. It's in every gesture. When you are putting yourself in a position of looking at the manipulation nonstop, it just gets to you."

Watching the program didn't devastate the British Film Society members at all. They didn't seem to get the point: "When I was a girl,

I would *love* to see Deanna Durbin ..." Or, "Oh, but in that scene Cary Grant was so ...." The audience, all of them film buffs, many of them creators of their own 8 or 16mm films, were *entertained* by the sequences. "I was shocked," said Susan, "that people could not step back and look at the way women were treated by the filmmaker — or by the society. The most astounding thing was that people could not recognize that the media is manipulative. If you cry in a movie when somebody gets killed, the director planned every light, every movement to get you to do that. People are not aware of what the media are doing in their lives. If you open your eyes and you see it, it makes you feel horrible. So we call it entertainment or we say it's really not so horrible."

They started with the opening sequence of **The Opposite Sex**, a '50s remake of the '30s film, **The Women**. According to Susan's outline:"Quintessential Hollywood packaging by the mid-fifties intended to be innocuous, hygienic and fit for the whole family. Decorative poses behind the credits combined with a title song with lines like "Why do men who should know better/Gape at a well-shaped sweater?/The answer is the opposite sex.' Cut after the quick introductory narration which includes: 1) 'The female of the species — often livelier, always deadlier'; 2) 'Don't get me wrong, some of my best friends are women.'" Susan said the remake, done at the height of the push to keep women in the home, was far more insidious than the original.

The first grouping of clips was called "The Cinema and Women's Rights," including scenes from **The Emancipation of Women**, a documentary, Mai Zetterling's **The Girls**, the prologue of **Kitty Foyle**, **The Perils of Pauline** (Betty Hutton in the sweat shop sings "The Sewing Machine, A Girl's Best Friend"), and **Salt of the Earth**.

"Women in The Silent Cinema" included Lillian Gish, brutally dominated by her father in **Broken Blossoms**, several scenes from **Love Goddesses** (one sequence ends with de Mille's **The Cheat**, with Sessue Hayakawa branding Fannie Ward), and a World War I propaganda film in which an exiled suffrage leader is called back from France to fire up women's rightists about the war effort (a housewife looks up, sees The Spirit of War — a woman — and drops her ironing; a prostitute looks up and drops her tawdry affair ... and they go off to join the war effort).

"The Love Goddesses And The Sex Objects/Images Of Woman" included more sequences from **Love Goddesses**, the "Pettin' In the Park" number from **Golddiggers of 1933** (women are nude behind a screen, the screen lifts and they are wearing armor — a man gets a can opener to take it off), Viva in **Lonesome Cowboys**, and **King Kong**.

"The Feminine Mystique And Giving Them What They Want: The Hollywood Response To Women As Its Principal Consumer Group" included **Bachelor Mother** (shows woman's instinct for mothering and male ineptitute), **Every Girl Should Be Married** (Cary Grant lectures a women's club on the parent's responsibility to the child, and Betsy Drake chases him), and the opening of **The Woman's Film**, showing how this mystique is shattered by everyday life ("I thought marriage would mean I could lie on a couch and read a book, something I've never done, and I promised myself some candy and coca cola but somehow it wasn't like that").

"Women And Work" included **So Your Wife Wants to Work**, a comedy filler, and the opening shots from **Kisses For My President** (the inaugural ceremony where it turns out that the President is not Fred MacMurray but his wife, Polly Bergen).

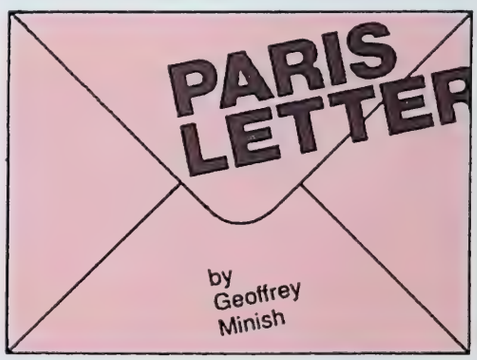
"Endings" (to illustrate the sell-outs, the reversion to traditional roles) included **The Women** (the golddigger gets her comeuppance and the heroine is restored to her husband. Shearer, arms outstretched, "Pride is a luxury a woman in love cannot afford."), **Kisses For My President** (the lady president becomes pregnant and resigns her office. "Chalk it up to the superiority of man. It took 40 million women to elect you, and one man to get you out."), and **Adam's Rib** (the bedroom scene after the reconciliation. Tracy shows how men can use wily tricks too, and Hepburn cracks back, but the end line is "Vive la difference!").

The program ended with "The Modern Cinema and Reserve Clips," including **Klute**, **Georgy Girl**, **La Peau Douce**, and **Birth of a Nation**.

Once I spoke with a feminist who felt that modern plays should not be shown without a discussion afterward about the pressures that cause all those warped people to appear up there. Of course that's impossible, the way things are set up now. Movies, especially, are shown so many times a day that time out for discussions would mean a lot less revenue for the theater owner, who doesn't care about societal pressures or phony images to begin with. Special panels or discussion groups appeal to specialized audiences; still, they'd give us a little more power by letting us know that we can, at least, talk back to the media.

*Sondra Lowell*

*Sondra Lowell is a freelance tap dancer, based in New York.*




TAKE ONE's Women in Films issue made no mention of France's Alice Guy, although Miss Guy was in fact the world's first woman director. Moreover, Bordas' *Encyclopédie du Cinéma* says of her that she "invented the comic sketch," at a time when directors like Meliès, Pathé, and Lumière were busy filming everyday reality. There appears, then, to be a case for Miss Guy as the inventor of the fiction film, except that, according to the encyclopedia, it has not been established whether she began her career before or after 1900.

A check, however, with a clippings library turned up an item from the March 7, 1958, issue of the newspaper *France-Soir* in which Miss Guy was quoted as saying she made her first film, **La Fée aux Choux** in 1896, at the age of 23. Assuming her memory was accurate, that would give her a three-year head start on the so-called father of the "story film," Edwin S. Porter.

Miss Guy told *France-Soir* she had been working at the time as secretary to the man who sold Lumière projectors. Needing movies to sell along with them, her boss instructed her to shoot a short feature.

"It's the perfect job for a girl," he said. "Clean, pleasant, and not tiring."

Miss Guy sat down and wrote a script, designed the sets, and shot the movie. She subsequently shot about 100 more, including a **Vie du Christ** (she was strong on Bible subjects) and **Mireille**, the latter co-directed with Louis Feuillade, whom she had encouraged when he was a young journalist.

In 1907, now married, she emigrated to the United States and set up her own studios. When the major companies started expanding, she refused their offers to buy her out, and in a few years she was financially ruined. She came back to France and earned her living as a translator. She was "rediscovered" in 1957, when Henri Langlois gave a reception for her at the Cinémathèque. Then she dropped out of sight again. The Bordas encyclopedia, published in 1967, said she was living in Brussels. I have not been able to find any record of her death, so presumably she is still alive and, one hopes, as well as a person can be at the age of nearly 100.

Langlois, rumored to be in financial difficulties once again at the Cinémathèque (over things like telephone bills), devoted a three-hour program in March to John Grierson and the British GPO school, as a memorial tribute to Grierson. The program began with Grierson's own **Drifters** and proceeded chronologically to Humphrey Jennings' Festival of Britain flagwaver, **Family Portrait**. It would be interesting to know what Grierson thought of the latter film, with its celebration of consensus politics and of the nation as a "family." **Drifters** has been criticized for its lyrical images of the British fishing industry, where the accident rate, I believe, is even higher than in the British mines, but Grierson did also show the marketplace forces governing the fishermen's lives. He knew where the body was buried. No doubt Jennings did, too, but as Establishment propaganda **Family Portrait** had to play down social embarrassments such as bad housing. People used to lament Jennings' premature death as a severe loss to the British cinema, but even the camerawork in **Family Portrait** (and in **Listen to Britain**, also programmed), seems dated today, whereas the camerawork of **Drifters** has the freshness of classic cinema. As for Grierson's regrettable lyricism, isn't there at least an element of lyricism in the teamwork of a ship's crew? Basil Wright, after all, in **Night Mail**, managed to find it in the far more prosaic life of the mail train worker, admittedly aided by that curious magic that railway engines, like ships, always generate on the screen.

(**Night Mail**, because of its W. H. Auden verse commentary, used to be a great favorite with those highbrows who normally wouldn't have been caught dead at any movie not directed by Chaplin or Eisenstein. Seeing Wright's film now, nearly 40 years after it was made, you are struck by how totally superfluous, how downright wrong, the verse is, one of those bright ideas that nearly ruined a masterpiece.)

In my previous Paris Letter I wrote about *La Revue du Cinéma*'s allegations that the Canadian National Film Board had been blocking the release of Pierre Perrault's **Un Pays Sans Bon Sens** and **L'Acadie, L'Acadie**. This has subsequently been denied by the NFB's Paris representative, Roland Ladouceur, who in a letter printed in the magazine's March issue said that **Un Pays Sans Bon Sens** had been given first showings in nine Canadian cities between December 1970 and March 1971, although he didn't explain why all but two of

those cities — Edmonton and Winnipeg — were in Quebec province. As for **L'Acadie, L'Acadie**, it was ready for release last summer but, summertime being bad for the box office, the NFB had preferred to wait until early this year, when the film was shown both on Canadian TV and in movie theatres.

The April issue of *La Revue du Cinéma* carries an enthusiastic report on the Canadian Film Festival held in Poitiers in February, which was not only a critical success but a commercial one as well: 12,000 tickets sold during the festival's 10-day run. "We saw the birth," the article says, "of a new major current in the world cinema, as important in its originality as the British 'Free Cinema' and the South American 'Cinema Novo.'" The article's author, Raymond Lefévre, singles out Jean-Pierre Lefebvre's **La Chambre Blanche** as the best film of the festival, describing it as "a visual poem that makes you want to destroy the collected works of Descartes, that icy moulder of the French mind."

# BOOKS

**The autobiography and sex life of Andy Warhol,** by John Wilcock. Other Scenes, Inc., 204 W. 10th St., New York 10014. $5.00

**Andy Warhol,** by Andy Warhol and others. Museum and Gallery Publications, Worldwide Books, Inc., New York. Distributed by Boston Book and Art Publisher. $7.50; in Canada, $8.95

**Andy Warhol,** by Rainer Crone. Praeger. $22.95; in Canada, $27.95

**Andy Warhol: Films and Paintings,** by Peter Gidal. Studio Vista/Dutton. $2.25; in Canada $2.95

We've known for a long time that Andy Warhol is the super Culture Hero of our time, with a complete underground mythology about the Factory, the Superstars, his own rock group and nightclub and fashions — in clothes, environments and people — plus the most dazzling collection of groupies ever. He's got the panache and daring of an epic hero. There are a lot of outrageous things happening in art today, but who else would paper the Guggenheim in gigantic Elsie the Borden Cow wallpaper? Who else would pile up a bunch of *real* Brillo boxes (which are, by now, just imitation Warhols) and call them sculpture? Now he's published a novel, *a*, which as Peter Gidal says "is the first novel not to have been read by its author." He has willingly authenticated paintings done by other people, signed tins of Campbell's soup, and sent a substitute off to lecture in his place. His mother paints pictures and signs them "Andy Warhol's Mother." He gives classically opaque answers in interviews and swears that everything he is is on the surface of his art: "The interviewer should just tell me the words he wants me to say and I'll repeat them after him. I'm so empty I can't think of anything to say. I'm not more intelligent than I appear. I'm not really saying anything now."

For all his living in public, in a style that documents itself continually through film, polaroid and tape, Warhol retains that secret ingredient that keeps the myth alive. Warhol has somehow kept what most of the other superstars have lost through their continual public exposure: mystery. Rainer Crone states matter-of-factly that Warhol was born in Pittsburgh on August 6, 1928. Peter Gidal is a little cagier, saying that he was born in Philadelphia sometime "in 1930." John Wilcock asks Gerard Malanga, who says Warhol was born in 1929 after July 21st. The mystery of Warhol's birthday is clearly a known joke. In Warhol's *Pork*, a play that ran last summer in London, the main character "B" refuses to have his astrological chart done, and the other characters comment on his secrecy about his birthday. And this is just one of the many mysteries about Warhol.

John Wilcock, writer of **The autobiography & sex life of Andy Warhol** is the super-groupie of them all. He knows what all the mysteries are, and he explores them all. He is particularly concerned with Warhol's house, his sex life, who his closest friends are, and what Warhol is really like. All this is pretty interesting, I must admit, but there's something creepy about the way it comes out. In a book that's mostly interviews (with a few reprints of articles from *Other Scenes* and the *Village Voice* ), the interviewer is the only constant, and his personality and interests become rather pressing. He asks the same questions over and over. The one great question is about the real mystery of Warhol: why nobody understands him. "My feeling is shared by most of the people I speak to, which is that he's probably one of the most misunderstood people of this particular era. Misunderstood by who? By the public at large. Anybody who is in any remote way close to him, what they understand the most about him, is how misunderstood he is by the people who are not close to him." Wilcock explores this strange phenomenon with nearly all the people he interviews, and the result is the crystallization of

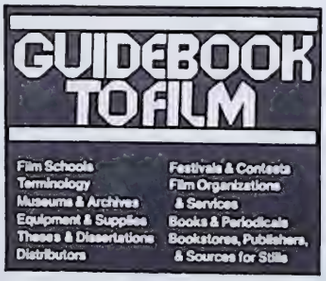

HR&W

**The Cinema of Stanley Kubrick**
by Norman Kagan

Kubrick's dazzling film of Anthony Burgess' *A Clockwork Orange* is now being seen around the country. It is only the latest triumph in a string of successes which include *2001: A Space Odyssey*; *Dr. Strangelove: Or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*; *Lolita*; *Spartacus*; and *Paths of Glory*. Kubrick is, incontestably, one of the world's preeminent directors. This book chronicles his career from beginnings to pinnacle; examines each film closely; and advances a carefully documented, fascinating theory of Kubrick's astonishing thematic consistency.

August/$9.25/5 1/2×8 1/4/192 pp./Illustrated

**Guidebook to Film**
by Ronald Gottesman and Harry Geduld




Despite the immense public and academic interest in films, and the boom in film history, appreciation, and production courses at the high school and college level, there has been no basic reference guide, no comprehensive introduction to the study of film. This book meets that need. In convenient format, the *Guidebook* provides the fundamental facts for buff, student, and professional: the many related writings on film, archives, schools, equipment, distributors, still sources, organizations and services, and festivals.

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## ANNOUNCING:
## AN INSIDE LOOK
## AT CZECH FILMMAKING.

### SPECIAL MONEY-SAVING OFFER
### TO READERS OF THIS MAGAZINE

The "bright young men and women" referred to in the title of this new book are the filmmakers of the Czech New Wave of the sixties. Josef Skvorecky was associated with most of the important directors of this period (including Nemec, Schorm, Forman, Passer and Chytilova) and the largest section of the book is devoted to their work. However, the work of earlier filmmakers is not ignored, for *All the Bright Young Men and Women* traces the entire history of the Czech cinema from its earliest days to the post-invasion seventies.

Josef Skvorecky is "one of Europe's leading novelists". He is also an essayist, translator and screenwriter, whose screenplays have been filmed by Evald Schorm and Jiri Menzel among others. *The Cowards*, Skvorecky's first novel to be translated into English, was published by Grove Press in the United States and by Gollanz and Penguin in Britain. He is presently teaching at the University of Toronto.

*All the Bright Young Men and Women* is published jointly by the film magazine TAKE ONE and by Peter Martin Associates. Its 280 pages include more than 100 illustrations, a comprehensive index, and a chronological listing of the most important Czech films and their directors.

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**Take One, Box 1778, Station B, Montreal 110, Canada**

Please send me as quickly as possible copies of **All the Bright Young Men and Women** at the special price of just $7.95 per copy (regularly $8.95 in all bookstores). I enclose my cheque or money order. You pay postage and shipping costs. If I am not absolutely satisfied, I may return my books within fifteen days for a full refund.

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# db

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# Reel Plastic Magic

by Laurence Kardish

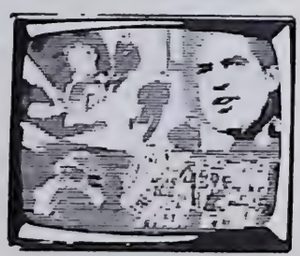
Illustrated with over 100 photographs, this comprehensive book covers the story of commercial filmmaking and devotes large sections to the black filmmakers of the 20s and the independents of the 50s and 60s.

Mickelson asks: Does violence and assassination on television lead to further violence and assassination? Do social movements spread faster with TV coverage? Has the political orientation of broadcasters changed faster than that of the general public? The author is former president of CBS-TV news. His answers are provocative, fascinating, and important.

# The Electric Mirror

SIG MICKELSON • THE ELECTRIC MIRROR

POLITICS IN AN AGE OF TELEVISION



AT GOOD BOOKSTORES EVERYWHERE

a mystique and a special inner circle of people who understand and are part of the mystique. But it's Wilcock who pushes it, who asks the leading questions about it, and who often admits to a strange feeling that he doesn't always know what's going on.

Wilcock isn't alone among critics, however, in his assertion of the Warhol mystery. Gidal's book begins "... Andy Warhol is an enigma, partly because his art and his person are difficult to understand through conventional modes of criticism and insight." Crone emphasizes the misunderstanding and promises a new critical approach. But Wilcock seems the most insistent, particularly in contrast to the interviewees, who seem to regard Warhol and themselves as real people, rather than as mythological figures. Wilcock continues the mythologizing in his book by never identifying the interviewees beyond their names. If you don't know who or what they are, or their connections with Warhol, you discern them from their statements or not at all.

There are lots of photographs — of the people interviewed, of Warhol, and of his work. The pages aren't numbered, and some of them are falling out already in my copy, but at $5.00 this is one of the best buys of the recent lot of books about Warhol.

The second volume was published on the occasion of the Andy Warhol exhibition at the Moderna Museet, Stockholm in 1968. Warhol had a hand in the book, though nothing more than that is said about the way it was put together, or who did what. It begins with 13 pages of famous quotations from Warhol — "I never wanted to be a painter. I wanted to be a tap-dancer." The rest is photographs. Reproductions of Warhol's work (none in colour), photos taken at the Factory by Billy Name, and photos of the Stockholm exhibition. The Factory photos form the bulk of the book. None are identified, no dates given, no persons named.

All the evidence of the myth is there, without pretentious intellectual or fan-magazine personal commentary to get in the way of your own myth-making. There are hundreds and hundreds of photographs (pages aren't numbered, so I don't know how many), including 16 pages of coke bottles, 17 of Marilyn, and lots of Andy in the Factory and in (I think) his house! This is by far the most satisfying of all the books — for scholars, myth-makers, and groupies alike.

Crone is a German art critic, and his very scholarly book includes all sorts of worthwhile things: a complete catalogue of paintings and exhibitions, a filmography and a bibliography, as well as a historical outline placing Warhol in the context of contemporary artists.

He deals with Warhol as a revolutionary, and approves Henry Geldzahler's statement that Warhol is *not* a Pop artist, but an artist who "has worked out an aesthetic-revolutionary *practice* ... a structural analysis of our legacy of conceptions about art and aesthetics." Crone discusses Warhol as a political artist: "The moment the criterion of authenticity in art breaks down, the entire function of Art is transformed. Its basis in ritual is replaced by a basis in another area of practice, namely, politics." Concrete example: the Thirteen Most Wanted Men series for the New York World's Fair. "These pictures were such political dynamite that Governor Rockefeller ordered them removed. Warhol did not take them down; instead, he painted them over in silver, thereby creating his first abstract painting. The incident illustrates certain bourgeois attitudes towards representational art: unable to cope with 'documentary realism,' the art-consumer society accepts abstraction."

Crone traces Warhol's development from his working-class origins in Pittsburgh, his connection with a small New York theatre group where he became acquainted with "Brecht's definition of realism and the instructive value of his theory of alienation," his successful career as a commercial artist (Warhol: "I'd do anything they told me to do, correct it and do it right. I'd have to invent, and now I don't; after all that 'correction,' those commercial drawings would have feelings, they would have a style .... The process of doing work in commercial art was machinelike, but the attitude had feeling to it."), through his development as artist-filmmaker. All this is fine as far as it goes.

But the text is far too short. You can tell from the price that this is a coffee-table book, and as such it isn't very thorough. The scholarly apparatus can fool you for a minute into thinking you've read something solid, and you *have* read a lot of interesting statements, and you probably have a general idea of what Warhol has done. Maybe that's all you need, in a book that's basically pictorial.

This is where the shitty part comes in. The book is printed on cheap paper, and the pictures are not well reproduced. Of 250-plus pages of pictures, only 16 of them are in colour, on the same quality paper, and they're pallid and lifeless. They give you no sense of the vitality and sheer beauty that the paintings have in real life. The problem of colour seems to come to a head in the Flowers paintings of 1965. Crone dismisses them as "meaningless image content" with colour used "strictly decoratively," and quotes Warhol at their exhibition: "I'm retiring from painting." Maybe. That doesn't do it for me, but you can't tell anything from the picture here.

From "The End of Painting" Crone slides easily into "Warhol the Filmmaker." This section is even sketchier than the first. He zips through Warhol's entire filmmaking career in two and a half pages, saying the usual: "The significance of [the early silent] — basically experimental — films lies in their radical disclosure of the structure of the film medium ... Warhol has succeeded in showing all the structural possibilities in [film]. He has also proven wrong the assertion that film provides an objective picture of reality ... there is no objective film: filming a person or thing influences it ... Warhol analyzes the structure of his medium and, by reducing formal considerations to a minimum, he exploits the autonomy of the apparatus and the conditions of production, which determine the character of the product." He denies that these films are boring. He mentions the superstars, suggests that **Chelsea Girls** was popular "probably because it had epic elements," explains **I, a Man, Bike Boy, Nude Restaurant**, and ******** in a phrase each, and sums them all up with the mealy-mouthed and rather stupid comment that in the feature films, "Warhol takes the step from experimental films to films with real content that analyze the condition of American society by portraying its younger generation." Holly Woodlawn represents the youth of America! If you're interested in Warhol's movies, this is not the book for you.

Finally, I take it all back about the scholarly apparatus. It's there, but it's so unwieldy and disruptive that it makes this book very difficult to read. It's a bad bet at $27.95.

Gidal's book studies the deep significance of Warhol's work from the point of view of both content and technique. No swift generalizations here, but detailed workings out of moral, personal, political and aesthetic implications, almost painting by painting.

It's analytical and intellectual with a vengeance. It also serves to place Warhol in a context of contemporary art, but Gidal's emphasis on the boredom, repetition, meaninglessness, and silence connects Warhol more with Samuel Beckett than with Brecht. (Warhol: "I like boring things. When you just sit and look out of a window, that's enjoyable. It takes up time .... My films are just a way of *taking up time*.") So rather than deny the boredom of the early films, as Crone does, Gidal positively glories in it: "Warhol's early film work can be defined as boring or exciting, depending on one's attitude, and then, in turn, the 'boredom' can be defined as positive or negative. Rather than overemphasize human feeling, reason, meaning, etc., Warhol takes one to the beginnings of confrontation with the 'other.' The easy vicarious identification in melodrama is simplistic and leaves no time for thought, commitment or revelation. It is, in practical, human terms, worthless. Crying at the sad parts of movies allows one to vicariously identify with the solidly identifiable 'good' against the obvious (usually black-shirted) 'evil.' This manipulation is both easy and pleasing to the general self-esteem. The anger that Warhol's films provoke is an obvious statement about people's fear of (and defenses against) confrontation with one another, let alone with one another's *essence*."

I don't know about you, but this really pisses me off. Gidal is elitist, pretentious, humourless and catty. He also takes the usual intellectual liberal "purist" attitude to the Morrissey films, dismissing **Flesh** and **Trash** as "only to superficial observation appear[ing] to be made by Warhol. They incorporate elements of his film-aesthetic and technique, but the differences are enormous and plain to see, mainly in compromises with conventional film traditions." This is silly. Yes, the differences are plain to see, but so are they between **Kitchen** and **Lonesome Cowboys**, or any of the others.

**Flesh** and **Trash** follow in the line of development of all the films, paralleling, as Morrissey pointed out, the history of motion pictures, from silent and stationary camera, through the introduction of "stars," to modern film techniques. **Lonesome Cowboys** has a story with a beginning and end, jump cuts, everything. **Flesh** and **Trash** have obvious scenarios, and more elaborate technical devices — even New Wave film references: in **Trash**, when Joe D'Allessandro is about to OD, the camera jumps to a Hitchcockian overhead shot. **Flesh** has an arty shot of Joe reflected in a pool with soft-focus sun spots and **Trash** has long zooms and tracking shots, as well as gorgeous back-lighting of Holly Woodlawn. The acting is more subtle in the last two, but you still get that double-exposure effect of a real person acting a character, and Joe D'Allessandro is his usual amazing self. The camp elements are more explicit, with forties movie music over the credits of **Trash**. **Flesh** begins with a Fred Astaire song ("I can't be bothered now ... I'm dancing") and Jackie Curtis talks about Lucille Ball and other forties stars. They're both marvelous films. **Flesh** is soft and beautiful, and **Trash** is simply fantastic. Paul Morrissey wrote and directed them, but the credits of both begin with "Andy Warhol Presents ... " In a book about Warhol's films, to deal with them in a parenthesis is irresponsible and closed-minded.

Nevertheless, this book is at times pretty good about the films. Gidal is sensitive and balanced about the effects of the actors (he describes Ingrid Superstar in **Chelsea Girls** as acting with "a coy sliminess"—right on) and the conceptual significance of the films.

The important contribution of this book is its discussion of time in Warhol's work — both painting and film. The concept of repetition in the paintings, the overlapping and changing clarity and colour of the same image, the serial presentation of the Death and Disaster and Thirteen Most Wanted Men paintings, even the framing and composition of the paintings, are related to a concept of time which is consistent with the twin-screen presentation of **Chelsea Girls**, the eight-hour **Empire State Building** and six-hour **Sleep** (which is actually three hours of ten-minute segments shot over a six-week period and spliced together to seem continuous), Warhol's habit of showing the early films at 16 frames per second, the editing and selecting of the late films, Ingrid's "eggs monologue" in **Bike Boy** and Nico's hair-cutting in **Chelsea Girls**. Warhol's time is related to "the permutative experiential possibilities for boredom" and is linked to "Beckett's formula of the obsessive neurotic repetitive enumeration of a minute chunk of reality," as well as to Duchamp's concern with repetition and context.

The pictures (about half the book) aren't as big as those in the Crone and Wilcock books, and there are none in colour, but the reproduction is pretty sharp because the paper is glossy.

*Kay Armatage*

*Kay Armatage co-edited TAKE ONE's "Women's Issue" (Vol. 3 No. 2).*

# REFLECTIONS ON THE CURRENT SCENE

by Herman G. Weinberg

Art may imitate life but sometimes life imitates art, as witness the recent discovery on a Pacific isle of a Japanese fugitive from World War II, ex-Sergeant Shoichi Yokoi, who hid in the jungle forests of Guam for 28 years after the island had been taken by the Americans. The story he told is in many of its details so like that of von Sternberg's **Anatahan** (filmed in 1953) that one must smile wryly when one remembers that Sternberg's prophetic film was not liked in Japan (although it was, itself, inspired by an actual incident that had taken place on a jungle isle in the Pacific, reported by *Life* in 1951) and, though well received by the critics in New York, and ecstatically by those in Paris, was not a popular success. "Too fantastic!" audiences said, "Too incredible!" Well, time proved how right Sternberg was — as he, of course, always was. The point of all this, however, is that not a single film critic or historian or whatever had the historical sense to mention it. So much for the stuff of film history.

Another kind of forgetfulness was the kind the ancient Greeks sought to induce —forgetfulness of sorrow through the drug nepenthe. For some mysterious reason, a company has been formed in London called Nepenthe Productions to produce a film deriving from Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*. Aside from the fact that such a complex and subtle project is doomed from the start as a film, the summoning up and reconstruction of the past, done with elaborate detail and excruciating slowness, is replete with sorrow for time lost, as dissected by the central character — who describes what takes place before his eyes, the decadence and death of a society. Harold Pinter will make the adaptation, if that's any consolation to you. No word, though, if it's just to be *Swann's Way* or (Heaven preserve us!) all six novels. (Talk about *The Complete Greed*, how about *The Complete Remembrance of Things Past*?)

Apropos *The Complete Greed*, Lotte Eisner tells me, and these are her very words: "To think that the **Greed** reels were destroyed because nobody thought that "McTeague" on the tins was **Greed**, as somebody there once told me." There's a thought for you that boggles the mind and just about caps all the **Greed** stories.

Did you know that René Clair once wanted to make a film with the Marx Brothers? (And vice-versa.) And speaking of that *rara avis* among present day films, great comedy like we once used to have before the cinema went berserk, I would like to quote, of all people, Ingmar Bergman on the subject, to wit: "There is nothing easier than to frighten a spectator. You can literally drive him mad with fear, since most people have somewhere within them a fear that is all ready to burst forth. It is much more difficult to make them laugh, and to make them laugh wholesomely ..." (here he is echoing Clair, who said the same thing in a letter to me once) "... and heartily. It is easy to put a spectator in a worse state than he was when he entered, but hard to put him in a better state." You will find this and more, many more penetrating observations in Clair's new book, *Cinema, Yesterday and Today* (Dover, New York), which I recommended to you some time back.

Finally, I would like to recommend three new film books: Lewis Jacobs' *The Documentary Tradition* (Hopkinson & Blake, New York), perhaps the best anthology of essays on the subject extant, and deserving of a place alongside *Grierson on Documentary* and Rotha's *Documentary Film*, the two classics in the field; Jonas Mekas' *Movie Journal*, another anthology, this time of his *Village Voice* columns, in which this absolutely original thinker on the subject of films and unique "high priest" of the New American Cinema (1959-71) — which he singled-handedly fostered and nurtured through the proverbial "thick and thin" — lets fly in a thousand directions at every aspect of the cinema you can think of, with exhilarating results (Macmillan, New York); finally *Double Feature*, by Michael Goodwin and Greil Marcus, consisting of a long interview with Jean-Luc Godard and Jean-Pierre Gorin *(The Dziga Vertov Film Group in America)* and the script of a film, *This Is It: The Marin Shoot-Out*. The book is dedicated to the memory of George Jackson and styles itself a book about movies and politics. I found both features fascinating. And if you don't think politics is the most important subject in the world right now, just look around you and see what's going on.

*Herman G. Weinberg has contributed articles to most of the world's leading film journals, served on the juries of various film festivals, been US correspondent for* Sight & Sound *as well as* Cahiers du Cinéma, *and published several books on the cinema.*

# VIDEO: AN ALTERNATIVE

BY

## MIKE GOLDBERG

Since Sony introduced small-format VTR in 1966, the technology has made quantum leaps almost yearly. At first, each company introduced its own system, and none were compatible, nor were tapes playable on other brands. In 1970, the Electrical Industries Association of Japan set official standards for 1/2" VTR (EIAJ-1). Most companies have adopted this, including Ampex, whose affiliate with Toshiba, Toamco, is producing their 1/2" cartridge system. Several companies formed an alliance outside of the EIAJ and agreed on 3/4" cassette standards. Tapes recorded on the American standard will play back in European CCIR-standard cassette machines, but not vice-versa. It is also possible to dub 1/2" tapes onto cassettes. Akai's 1/4" VTR is not compatible with any system.

Fuji Film has introduced an 8mm (not super-8) optical sound camera, and Kodak has demonstrated one for super-8. Fuji also has a machine which takes their color 8mm film cartridges, or 20 minutes of reel-to-reel with an adapter, and plays it on a TV monitor. The "CVR" works on a similar system to the EVR, which incidentally has been scrapped by CBS.

Ampex has recently introduced the first broadcast standard VTR to accept the unstable signal of helical scan. The implications of this on the elitist specialization of broadcast TV are far reaching (and far out), for it is now possible for anyone with a portapack to approach the broadcasters with material. Police footage of the riot at Attica as well as a tape shot in a mini-sub of a wreck in Vancouver harbor have been the first examples to my knowledge; and that was shot off the monitor, before Ampex developed the AVR-1.

After a year of letters and visits to Customs & Excise complaining about antiquated Canadian videotape importation regulations (we had to pay eight cents a foot plus federal sales tax just to look at the tape, the same cost as 2" broadcast tape), the regulation has been changed to allow videotapes of a non-commercial nature to enter Canada duty-free. As this will not be published for all departments immediately, the District Collectors of Customs & Excise have been notified.

*Radical Software* in their new magazine format will be $12.50 for nine issues. For subscriptions write to *Radical Software*, Suite 1304, 440 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10016.

Video White Light is charging $7.00 a year for ten issues of *Magnetoscope*, P.O. Box 298, Planetarium Station, New York, N.Y. 10024.

*Cable Information* for church-related and secular organizations costs $10.00 for 11 issues. Address for this newsletter is Room 852, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y. 10027.

Allan Frederiksen has published *Community Access Video*, the first manual with small-format video hard information, including machines, editing, sources of equipment, outlets, CATV access (Allan, alias Johnny Videotape, knows a lot about this from his ongoing confrontations with Howard Hughes' Teleprompter cable station in Santa Cruz) uses and techniques. Available from the author for $3.00; 695 30th Avenue, Apt. E, Santa Cruz, Calif. 95060.

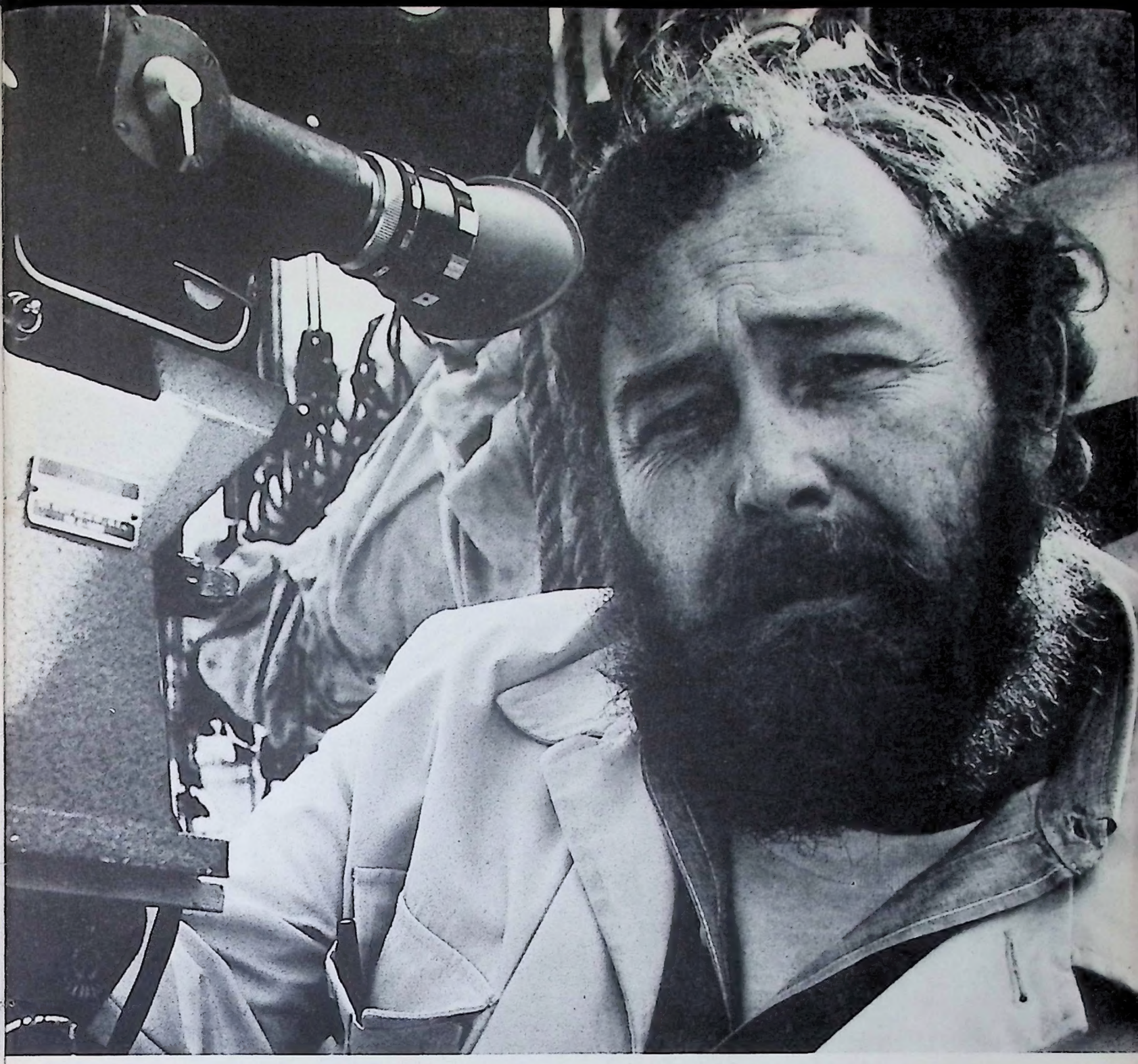
Watch for the *Global Village Video Manual* from St. Martin's Press this fall: or write Global Village, 454 Broome St., New York, N.Y. 10012.

If any readers have experience with, or knowledge of, use of VTR in the filmmaking process, please write me c/o TAKE ONE. I am preparing an article on the interface of the two media. Thanks.

In the previous issue I began a limited comparison of film and VTR. It is continued below.

| Film | Video |
|---|---|
| **Monitor:** It is not possible to monitor from a distance what a cine camera is recording. To film an occurrence from several angles, one must film the entire sequence with two cameras, then edit afterwards. | It is easy to edit a videotape during the action by observing the images from several cameras on monitors and electronically switching the recording machine to the camera with the most desirable image. It is not necessary for an operator to be at the camera if the focus is fixed and remote control cameras are available. Television monitors can be hooked up to the cameras even when the recording unit is not working, thus allowing observation of an occurrence from a distance (closed-circuit or CCTV). |
| **Editing:** Film can be readily examined with the naked eye, and can be spliced with small, simple apparatus. For amateur films, fairly inexpensive editing machines with small viewing screens are available. With sound it becomes more complicated. | In recording video information, the recording heads spin in contact with a magnetic tape being pulled obliquely across their path. It is impossible to pinpoint the spot at which the scan has just completed the full image without electrical apparatus. If one splices the tape, a visible skip, or roll bar, is seen as the machine readjusts to the new position of the scan's synchronization pulse. Editing is accomplished by re-recording the required segments on a second machine, which should be synchronously aligned with the first. (For video delay, I have manually cut the tape to form loops; and after a bit of practice, I had little if any image disintegration at the point of joining.) |
| **Projection:** The size of a projected image is proportional to the size of the film and its distance from the screen. 8mm can be projected to about 40" x 40"; 16mm to 50" x 50"; and 35mm to 26' x 40'. The immense size of the image allows many people to watch the projection in one room. | Although not more than about 15 people can comfortably watch one television set, the same program can be shown on many sets at once. Any portapack will drive 4 sets, and with RF amplifiers there is no limit ... each in different rooms if so wished. Philips puts out a very powerful video projector (Eidophor) which casts a bright image up to 40' x 40'. It used to be used extensively for back-projection on TV; now it is often used for projection of live sporting events. It costs about $1500 a day to rent (B & W). Less powerful beam projectors are available, and because of their relatively low cost are used in many university lecture halls. At Expo '67 there was a live, large, colour Eidophor projection of the Manicouagan power project hundreds of miles away. (In Japan I saw Sony's new, small, color video projector, to retail for around $3000. It's far out!) |
| **Universal Standards:** Film shot with a 16mm camera here can be projected on any 16mm projector, as can 8mm, 35mm, etc. | Unfortunately, universal standards have not been adopted for video. Europe uses 625 line scan (France used to have 819 line TV, but switched over), and America and her colonies use 525 line scan. Until a couple of years ago it was not possible to adapt one to the other, and it is now possible only for broadcast standards. Video transfer is only possible when play-back units of both standards are available. Moreover, equipment built by one company is not necessarily compatible with that of another. The Japanese second generation 1/2" equipment has been standardized so that tapes are interchangable, and their E.I.A.J. standards are spreading to the U.S. |
| The **permanence** of film gives it an advantage over video for information storage. | After 5-10 replays, small particles of oxide start to fall off the videotape, resulting in white spots moving across the scan lines of the TV. Although videotape is Mylar based, this tough plastic is still stretchable (which is why it is inadvisable to flip from rewind to forward without a pause) and changes with atmospheric conditions. Tapes should be kept in plastic bags to prevent dust particles from getting in, as these can damage the recording heads. It has been suggested that tapes to be kept for any length of time without replay not be rewound, but stored "tail-out". It is probably a good idea to play them once in a while to restore their elasticity. With information stored as a magnetic charge, tapes can be affected by certain radiation fields. Keep them in a cool, dry place. Because video recording is electronic, it may be possible to use it for computer information-retrieval systems. |

*Mike Goldberg is a Vancouver-based video-artist and writer, recently returned from research in Japan.*



"We weren't looking for awards ... but as soon as we saw the rushes, we all felt we had a winner ... and as it turned out, we were right ... I worked harder on that film than any I've ever shot ... maybe it's because I had more freedom ... the director trusted my judgment and used me as his eyes and sounding board ... we pored over movies and stills for months, looking for that flat, shallow effect in the images ... I used special lenses to capture the same kind of visual texture on film ... and we took no chances with film quality, either ... we used the total Eastman Color System throughout—from first negs to final release prints ... and this included Eastman's technical help whenever we needed it ... and it really paid off—not only at the festivals, but at the box office ... and that's what it's all about ..."

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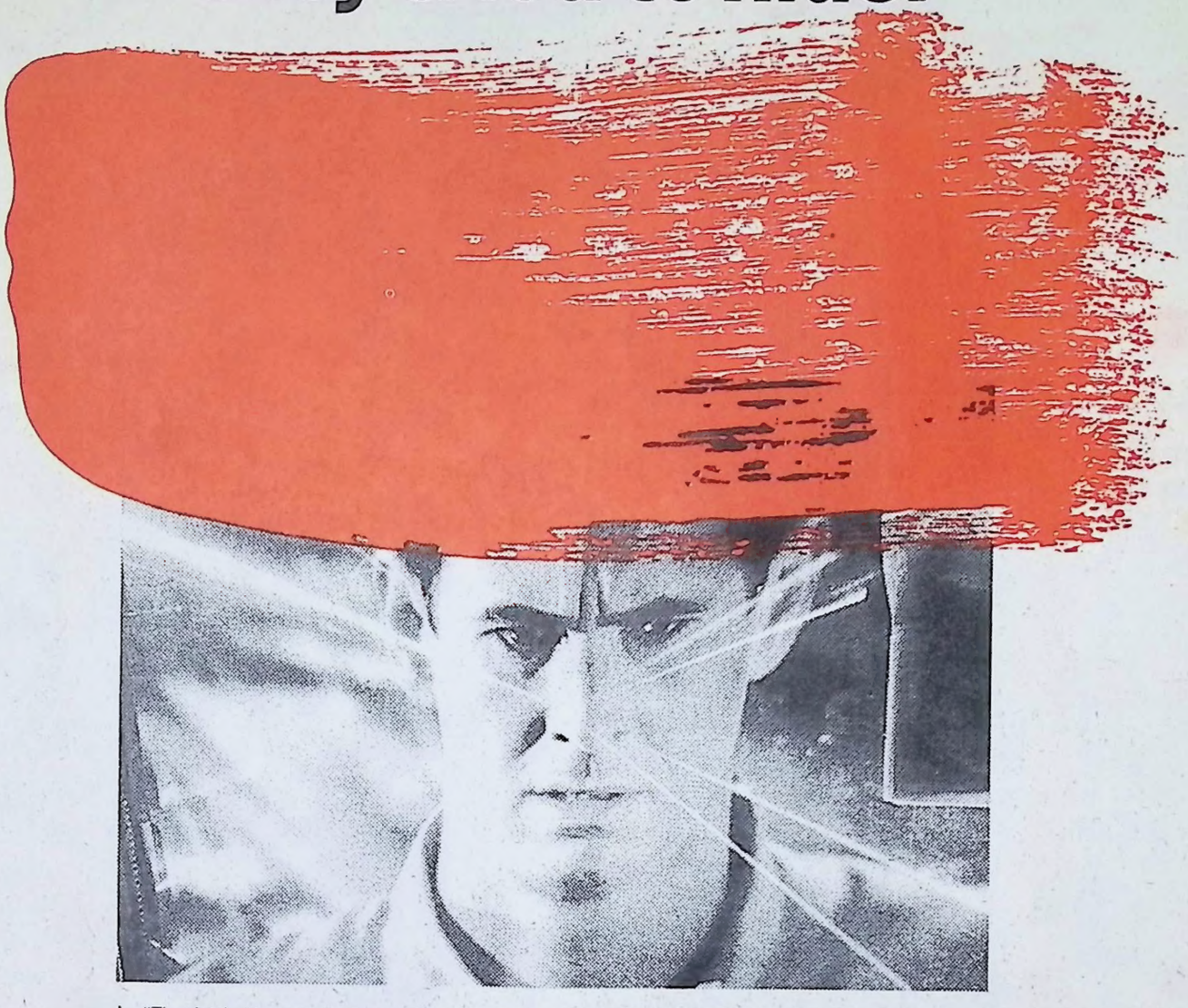
# The movie they tried to hide!



"The fatal thing about Pretty Poison is that, although it's really full of lyricism and innocence and muted joy, the story in bare outline lends itself to being promoted like any old cheap B sex-and-violence exploitation movie aimed at the teenage market. Not surprisingly, the movie is doing poor business and will finish its run tomorrow. Although a lot of big movies aren't helped by the press, this one wouldn't have a hope without a critical build-up; yet it was allowed to open without an advance press screening, and with no attempt to alert the local critics to what kind of movie it was."
**Martin Knelman, Toronto Star**

"This is a remarkable first feature film by a gifted young American, Noel Black — a movie that should have opened in an art house — and it was playing (without advance publicity or screenings) in a vast and empty theater, from which, no doubt, it will depart upon the week. And the losses will be so heavy that the movie companies will use this picture as another argument against backing young American directors. . . . Lorenzo Semple Jr. has written an unobtrusively thoughtful and well-controlled script — the best script of any American movie this year. Black's subdued direction has the uncorrupted sensitivity that, given the way movies are made and sold, and what the public seems to want, doesn't last long."
**Pauline Kael, The New Yorker**

". . .a truly marvelous thriller . . . Tony Perkins and Tuesday Weld give a pair of superb performances as a disturbed young loner and his bewitchingly innocent, twitchingly all-American honor-roll student and drum majorette of a girl friend. Lorenzo Semple Jr.'s screenplay, based on a novel by Stephen Geller, sustains a level of wit and tension that few modern films aspire to, let alone achieve."
**Joseph Morgenstern, Newsweek**

". . .builds to a horrific examination of the extent to which America can breed a generation of thrill-hungry, destructive dreamers. In his best performance since Psycho, Anthony Perkins is quite moving in an emotionally complex, hysterical role . . . Tuesday Weld's portrait of a contemporary, deranged Pollyanna is so intricate and truthful that it seems incredible for her to have been so misused in films for many years. Pretty Poison is a summery chiller, and even Johnny Mandel's rich musical score cannot dispel the Oresteian mood of Noel Black's quiet, American tragedy."
**Albert Johnson, Film Quarterly**

# Pretty Poison

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